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HISTORY  
OF THE  
TOWN OF CHESHIRE,

BERKSHIRE COUNTY, MASS.

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BY  
MRS. ELLEN M. RAYNOR  
AND  
MRS. EMMA L. PETITCLERC.

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INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER  
BY  
JUDGE JAMES M. BARKER.

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CLARK W. BRYAN & COMPANY, PRINTERS,  
HOLYOKE, MASS. AND NEW YORK CITY.  
1885.

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MRS. ELLEN M. RAYNOR AND MRS. EMMA L. PETITCLERC,  
CHESHIRE, MASS.

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TO THE  
PRESENT SELECTMEN OF CHESHIRE

GEORGE Z. DEAN  
HENRY F. WOOD  
FRANK REYNOLDS  
AND THEIR SUCCESSORS

THIS BOOK IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED

*By the Authors*

## PREFACE.

In offering to the public this simple history of a picturesque Berkshire town, the authors believe the occasion appropriate for an explanation of the circumstances that led to the undertaking.

From our earliest recollections, the study of the history, and the progress of the town, has afforded us a greater degree of pleasure than we have derived from but few other sources. The memories of childhood recall the delightful emotions we experienced when sitting in the chimney corner we listened to the thrilling tales of the early settlers as told by their immediate descendants, and a passion for a knowledge of the beginning, rise and progress of the little colony has marked the years in their passage.

In the delicious days of childhood every feature of the surrounding landscape was as familiar as household words. In the bright June days we wandered through the glens, from the hollows we plucked the violets, from the knolls the delicate blood root blossoms, and in autumn climbed the wooded hills for nuts. We knew the green islands in the river, the beds of white sand, the village streets and lanes, the yellowish spire of the ancient church where we went with our parents to worship God. Every house—every person—we knew them all in those olden days.

Since then, the graveyards have grown larger. It is there that we find the town of our childhood rather than in the village homes, or treading the village streets, and as a labor of love we commenced to gather the materials and trace the history from the log cabins of the settlers, and the stormy days of the long war to the present time.

We have noted the character, progress and final success of those brave men and women who came from the colony of Roger Williams to win by their labor a wilderness into smiles.

The task was not begun, nor the collection made with a view to immediate publication, but at the instigation of the Berkshire Historical Society, which had as an ultimate object the publishing of the histories of towns throughout the county.

## PREFACE.

The letter of Professor Perry, its president, given in full, explains the relation sustained toward the Society.

An increasing interest, the natural and incidental result of researches made, induced finally, the plan we have followed. Nearly every spot of note has been visited, every tale and tradition investigated, while facts have been carefully gathered for the purpose of forming an intelligent judgment and correct conclusions concerning the events of times past, and of the people who figured in those shadowy days. Possibly, more anecdotes are related than fall, usually, to the pages of history : but we tell them as they have come down—told by neighbor to neighbor, by father to son, by winter fires, when the mug of cider and the basket of rosy apples passed merrily around, and repeated here because through them one may better read the characters of those who left their impress on the town. Although not free from errors and imperfections, this book will be found to contain a faithful narrative of events that have transpired, and is, we fully believe, deserving the attention of those who have a local pride, as well as of the younger people to whom the stories of our pioneer ancestors are almost lost in the hazy distance.

To all, we send forth our little volume with a wish and a prayer that it may find interested readers and meet with favor in the pleasant homes of our town.



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WILLIAMS COLLEGE. Oct. 22, 1884.

MRS. E. C. RAYNOR AND MRS. E. L. PETITCLERC :

*Mesdames*.—You can say in your preface that the work was undertaken at the instance of the Berkshire Historical Society, that such parts of it as they shall choose to use will become a part of their History of the County under your names, and that the Society is very glad to have it published in fuller form preliminarily, so as possibly to draw in corrections and fuller information in reference to its ultimate publication under their auspices. I am ready as an individual, and as a president of the B. H. S., to testify to the care and zeal with which its facts have been gathered, and these facts clothed in accurate and elegant language.

Very kindly yours,

A. L. PERRY.

## NOTE OF THANKS.

To Mr. J. G. Northup, Town Clerk of Cheshire, we are under great obligations for assistance given in placing at our disposal books containing valuable knowledge, and in unearthing papers long since supposed lost, or forgotten entirely.

To Professor A. L. Perry we are indebted for positive facts concerning the battle of Bennington.

To Joab Stafford of Canajoharie, N. Y., for statements of the gallant colonel for whom he was named.

To the town of Cheshire for the gift of \$100 (one hundred dollars), and to all the following persons we owe our thanks for varied information: Mr. Edmond D. Foster, Mr. Henry C. Bowen and family, Dr. L. J. Cole, Mr. John B. Wells, Mr. Daniel Brown, Mr. Stewart White, Mr. Darius Mason, Mr. R. M. Cole, Mr. Owen Turtle, Mr. James Shea, Mrs. L. J. Cole, Mrs. Rebecca Dow, D. J. Northup, Mrs. Anna Richardson, Mrs. Warner Farnum, Mrs. Charles Bowen, Mrs. John Bucklin, Mrs. Julius Harmon (daughter of Squire Barker.)

## INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER

BY

JUDGE JAMES BARKER.

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## EARLY SETTLEMENT OF CHESHIRE.

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CAUSES LEADING TO THE INCORPORATION OF A TOWN. FIRST SALES OF LAND. NICHOLAS COOK AND JOSEPH BENNET. NEW PROVIDENCE. CAPT. JOAB STAFFORD. THE NOTCH BURYING GROUND. JOHN WELLS. SCENERY. LAND GIVEN FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE GOSPEL. CAPT. SAMUEL LOW HOLDS SLAVES. EPITAPH OF ELDER PETER WERDEN.

THE town of Cheshire was incorporated on the 14th of March, 1793. The title of the Act indicated that its territory was made up of parts of the towns of Lanesborough, Windsor, Adams and of the District of New Ashford, the inhabitants of New Ashford not having been incorporated as a town until May 1st, 1836.

On the 6th of February, 1798, so much of the farm of Jacob Cole, of New Ashford, as lay in that district was, "together with the said Jacob and his personal estate, set off from the said district, and annexed to the town of Cheshire, there to do duty and receive privileges." This annexation added three more to the twenty corners made by its boundary lines, and established its pre-eminence in this respect over all the towns in the Commonwealth on a so much firmer footing. Whether this predilection for corners came from the same cause which has made the population, and business and social life of the place desert its once thickly settled hill-tops, and congregate in that locality of the town known as Cheshire Corners, is a question which may at some future day be settled by the scientific branch of our Association. But it is reasonably certain that the bounds given in the Act of Incorporation, were not the result of an attempt to follow physical boundaries, but to bring into a community people of like tastes and religious feelings as far as possible. The attempt seems to have been remarkably successful, and the people of Cheshire to have been so remarkably unanimous even in political sentiment as to make current the

familiar tradition that when the first lone opposition ballot was put in the box by a citizen opposed in politics to all his neighbors, it was thrown out by the selectmen as having evidently been cast by mistake. It is among the earlier settlers of this territory that we must look for the leaven which was powerful enough to work throughout a township, creating the town in the first instance, and continuing its power until substantially all its citizens seem to have been united in sentiment, and vigorous and earnest in its expression.

These earlier settlers came more largely than the settlers of any other considerable portion of Berkshire from the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations. They were descendants, some of them of the very men who were the first to follow Roger Williams to Rhode Island, and generally they were men who had inherited and imbibed the spirit of her free institutions, and were educated in the religious beliefs prevalent in that colony rather than in the orthodoxy of the Massachusetts Colony.

The present paper will not be able to give the story of their emigration from Rhode Island, and their settlement in Berkshire in any connected form, or with a claim to that accuracy which ought to be attained in the documents prepared for an historical society. At most it will only gather the names and some facts in the lives of these early settlers, and call your attention to a village once flourishing and beautiful, but which has now utterly disappeared. A Berkshire hill-top once crowned with a church, and hillsides once dotted with farm houses and tenanted by a vigorous, an intelligent and a thriving population, but from which the buildings have disappeared, and whose only tenants now are the inmates of those narrow homes on which no signs of "To Let" or "For Sale" are exhibited, and in another portion of Cheshire we find later, but still early settlers who followed the first from Rhode Island, and took up their abode in that part of the town which is included in or is near to the present village of Cheshire, and was then within the limits of Lanesborough.

The story of the men who made the New Providence Purchase, and in 1767 removed their families and goods from Rhode Island to the splendid eminence which they christened New Providence Hill in affectionate remembrance of the hill in Providence, and there essayed to found and did found a new community, is worthy to be told. We will try to name some of the actors in it, and to open the field for further research.

\* \* \* \* \*

The portion of Cheshire to which we have already referred by its more ancient name of the New Providence Purchase and the crown of which was named by its early settlers New Providence Hill is now known as Stafford's Hill, a name derived from the Col. Joab Stafford who was one of

the prime movers in the emigration from Rhode Island to Berkshire, and one of the most prominent men in the settlement which they established. It appears certain that the territory embraced in the purchase was sold by the province in 1762 and was originally included in the township known as No. 6, the larger portion of which is now in the town of Savoy. An examination of the Province records in the office of the Secretary of the Commonwealth at Boston, discloses a full statement of the action of the General Assembly and Council in ordering and making the sale of several townships of province land in the western part of the province in 1762, most of them in Berkshire which sale included those parts of Cheshire which were formed from Windsor and Adams. That part which was formerly Lanesborough had been sold at an earlier date, and was then known as New Framingham. The records of these sales which included the old town of Adams then known as East Hoosuck, and the territory now included in Hinsdale, Peru, Windsor, Savoy and other towns may be found in the archives of the Historical Society, Pittsfield.

Of the townships there sold parts of two are within the limits of the present town of Cheshire, namely the northwestern portion of No. 4 and the west end of No. 6. Of these No. 4 seems to have been earliest settled. From deeds appearing on record it is evident that it had proprietors among whom there had been a division of common lands before the sale by order of the General Court in 1762.

There on the twelfth of June, 1762, James Burchard of a place called No. 4, in Berkshire County, conveys to his grandson, Matthew Wolf Jr., son of Matthew Wolf of the same town, house lot No. 66, on the southerly side of the same township butted and bounded according to the original survey as by the proprietors' book of records may appear, and as early as 1764, they were enjoying the luxury of selling lands for taxes in No. 4.

This township seems to have been as rich in names as Cheshire has been in corners, since it has borne successively the following in addition to No. 4: Dewey's Town, Bigot's Town, Williamsburg, Gageborough and Windsor.

The Noah Nash to whom it was sold in 1762 was a resident of Hatfield, and he continues to make deeds of lands in the township to 1784. Among these are deeds to David Parsons and many other names given in Barker's early history, page 24.

An examination of the latest county map shows that the New Providence Hill was directly north of the part of Windsor which was incorporated in the new town of Cheshire, and almost adjoining it the meeting of the five roads at the school house, one of which leads over the hill to Adams, and is on the line between No. 6, and No. 4.

In the vicinity of this portion of Windsor to the hill we find the moving force which brought it into the new town. Here too, lies one of the old burying grounds, to be noted further on, opposite the residence of W. P. Bennet.

It is not so easy to trace the history of the township known as No. 6. The present town of Savoy comprises the greater portion of the territory which was included within its bounds, as given in the order of sale of Feb. 17, 1762, and merely states that it was originally No. 6.

The Rev. David D. Field, in his history of Berkshire county, published in 1829, gave Bullock's grant as the foundation of the town, some other lands being incorporated with it. He states that Col. William Bullock of Rehoboth, as agent for the heirs of Capt. Samuel Gallop, received from the General Court of 1770 and 1771, a township of six miles square, in consideration of their services and sufferings in an expedition into Canada about the year 1690, in what was called King William's war, the township to be located in any unappropriated land belonging to Massachusetts, and that Col. Bullock located the grant to the southeast and north of Bernardston grant comprising the western and greater part of Florida, and which had been previously located. Recalling the bounds of No. 6, as given in the General Court's order of sale, the report of the committee, and the plan, it is certain that most, if not all, of this territory is included in No. 6, and also that the part of Cheshire which comprises the New Providence Purchase, or Stafford's Hill is in the same township of No. 6. This township was sold June 3d, 1762, by the committee to Abel Lawrence for £1,350, and his bond taken, with Charles Prescott, Esq., surety, for £1,330 of the purchase money.

Who this Abel Lawrence was does not appear, nor has the writer been able to ascertain in what manner the title conferred upon him by this sale was divested.

There is no deed of record from him in the Pittsfield Registry, and the whole township seems to have been traded after the sale, and a part of it within the term of five years, during which he was allowed to settle it according to the vote, as unappropriated land of the Province.

This break in the chain of title has been very provoking in the search for a record of the history of a settlement of Stafford's Hill, causing it at one time to be given up in despair. But information gained by sitting down to examine page by page, in course, the early volumes of records in the Registry of Deeds, enables us to give a probable account or theory.

For some unknown reason Abel Lawrence surrendered to the Province his right to the township soon after his purchase. The town of Hatfield, portions of whose lands had been included in the new townships Nos. 5 and



7, which were sold by the same committee in June 1762, made claim for compensations for the land thus taken, and the General Court in the same year seems to have awarded to them an equivalent located in part, at least, on the west end of the township which had been sold as No. 6 to Abel Lawrence. This land the town of Hatfield placed in the market and we find a conveyance of it made in 1765 by Israel and William Williams of Hatfield, and Israel Stoddard of Pittsfield. This tract was of 1,176 acres in one rectangular parcel, 432 rods east and west, by 435 rods and 14 links north and south and bounded southerly by the line of New Framingham, afterward Lanesborough.

Another and larger parcel of No. 6, seems,—upon evidence similarly found—to have been granted to Aaron Willard, Jr. Esq., and his associates purchasers of the new township No. 3, now Worthington, as an equivalent for a deficiency of land taken off from No. 3, and in 1766, we find “John Worthington and Josiah Dwight both of Springfield, Timothy Dwight of Northampton, Salah Barnard of Deerfield, and Aaron Willard Jr., of Lancaster in the County of Worcester, Esq’s.” conveying three thousand seven hundred and forty acres and fourteen perch of land lying north of, and adjoining to Lanesborough, incorporated from New Framingham in 1765, and encircling on three sides the former parcel granted to Hatfield. These two parcels undoubtedly cover all that part of the original No. 6 which is now within the limits of Cheshire, and together they constitute the New Providence Purchase, and it was on them that the definite settlement to which Cheshire is traceable was made. The deeds run to “Nicholas Cook of Providence, in the County of Providence in the Colony of Rhode Island, Esq., and to Joseph Bennet, in Coventry, in the County of Kent in the Colony of Rhode Island, Esq.,” making them equal tenants in common of both tracts. The copies of these deeds are on page 31 of Barker’s History.

This Nicholas Cook of Providence and Joseph Bennet of Coventry are the prime movers in the settlement of Cheshire, and of the early emigration from Rhode Island to Berkshire. Prior to their purchase there is mention in the Registry of Deeds only of one conveyance to an inhabitant of Rhode Island so described, of lands in the county. On the 28th of June, 1763, one Moses Warren of Hopkinton, Rhode Island, Clothier, buys of Joseph Warren of Tyringham, lot No. 137, in Tyringham, 70 acres “whereof,” says Joseph Warren, “I was the original proprietor.” Whether Joseph Warren also came from Rhode Island and afterwards induced a brother to follow him does not appear; but with this exception the first ten books in the Registry of Deeds disclose only purchasers in New Providence, Gageborough, Lanesborough and East Hoosuck by residents of Rhode

Island, save only that the Rev. Samuel Hopkins, who removed from Great Barrington to Newport in 1770, on the 21th of March, 1772, conveys lands in Great Barrington to his son David, who is also described as of Newport, Rhode Island. Of the two original proprietors of the New Providence purchase Nicholas Cook, the more prominent, seems to have been engaged in it merely as a speculation. He remained in Rhode Island. He was a member of the Court of Assistants of that Colony from 1752 to 1761, and Deputy Governor in 1768 and 1769. Joseph Bennet seems to have been admitted a freeman of the Rhode Island Colony from Coventry, in May, 1758. A Mr. Joseph Bennett of Newport, possibly an ancestor, was made High Sheriff on the 1st of May, 1700. The only other mention of Joseph, of Coventry, is under date of 23d of February, 1761, when he was made one of a committee, consisting of Nicholas Cook, Esq., Messrs. John Brown, Knight Dexter, Joseph Bennet, Joseph Bucklin and George Jackson, to apply to paying the streets of Providence, a lottery of three classes for raising the sum of £6,000 granted by the General Assembly upon the petition of the citizens of Providence. We might speculate whether Nicholas Cook, Esq., the chairman of this committee, found Mr. Joseph Bennet, his colleague, so efficient in the management of the lottery, or the work of paying that he selected him as his partner in the subsequent operation in wild lands, and, also, whether both of them realized, out of the lottery or the contracts for paying, the money which they paid for their Berkshire purchase. But in whatever way they became acquainted they were able to induce their neighbors to share in their enterprise and to remove with Bennett to the new country or to follow him. Captain, afterward Colonel Joab Stafford was employed by them to lay out and map their purchase, and the map which was filed in the Registry of Deeds, shows that the gallant captain was a master of the pen and rule as well as of the sword. This map was found by the process of examination above referred to, looking through the book page by page, after all hope of seeing it had been lost. Captain Stafford, a townsman in Coventry, of Joseph Bennet himself, made the first purchase of lands from Cook and Bennet, on the 5th of November, 1766, 396 acres in 3 lots, and on the next day Cook and Bennet, by a deed acknowledged in Providence and witnessed by Joab Stafford and Silas Downer, made partition between themselves of their remaining lands. It is surmised that Nicholas Cook, Esq., was a lawyer and drafted his own deeds, and if so he was a good one, for this indenture of partition is a model, delighting a lawyer's heart.

This partition having been made, sales were made to others, and the settlement advanced. The earliest to remove from Rhode Island seem to have settled on the New Providence Hill as it was called, and to have belonged

to the Baptist denomination. Following them came other inhabitants of Rhode Island, many of them settling farther to the north in what was then East Hoosuck, or No. 1, now Adams, and of these very many were Quakers. To this difference in religion is probably due the fact that the New Providence settlement was not incorporated with East Hoosuck into the town of Adams in 1778, in which contingency probably there would have been no Cheshire; for, according to the Rev. John W. Yeomans in Field's History of Berkshire, it was the wish of the New Providence settlers to be incorporated with Adams, and during 1778 the inhabitants of East Hoosuck were twice called on to vote on the question of extending the charter so as to embrace New Providence, but each time rejected the proposition. New Providence Purchase must, however, have been subsequently annexed (by an Act of which we fail to find mention,) to the town of Adams. For, for some years prior to 1793, we find the people residing upon it, dating their letters from Adams, and the church established on the hill calling itself the Baptist Church in Adams. The present south line of Adams is evidently the old south line of East Hoosuck, so that it seems reasonably certain that the part of Adams which at the incorporation of Cheshire in 1793 went into the new town, was just the New Providence Purchase, and that it had been annexed to Adams after the incorporation of that town. The list given in appendix shows the conveyance recorded in the first ten books of the Pittsfield Registry of Deeds running to persons named as residents of Rhode Island. It included all the surnames given by Dr. Field in his history of early and prominent settlers of Cheshire and many more, and there is reason to suppose that most of the persons named in it became residents on the land conveyed to them.

To return to the first settlers—we find that Capt. Joab Stafford attended the general assembly at Newport in May, 1762, as a deputy from Coventry. In 1778 we find him empowered as Colonel Joab Stafford, to issue his warrant to some principal inhabitant to the newly incorporated town of Adams, requiring him to warn the inhabitants thereof to assemble for their first Town Meeting, and on the 21st of August 1801, we find him describing himself as Joab Stafford of Cheshire, Gentleman, quit-claiming to Allen Briggs of Adams, Gentleman, Daniel Reid, Yeoman, and Timothy Mason, Gentleman, both of Cheshire, for \$400 all the remnant of his land in the New Providence Purchase, including 14 acres, "on which an execution was sometime since extended in favor of Ruloff White against me." Doubtless the court records would disclose the cause of action; but it is better not to peer too curiously into the gallant Colonel's embarrassments.

One of the witnesses to the deed is Richard Stafford, perhaps his son, and it is acknowledged before Ezra Barker, as a justice, a son of one of his

Rhode Island compatriots. Richard Stafford seems to have married Susanah, daughter of Elisha Brown, another of the Rhode Island people, and in 1823 they were living at Canajoharie, N. Y.

Tradition preserves a pleasant account of his introduction of Mrs. Stafford to her new home on the summit of New Providence Hill. While he was mapping out the purchase, and erecting a house on the Lots, to which he took title, his wife remained in Rhode Island. When the new building was ready for occupancy he returned for his family. As they journeyed on the good woman wished to know, and sought for an exact description of the new house she was to occupy and of its surroundings. But the Captain did not see fit to gratify her curiosity, and as they approached their destination, sought her opinion of the different dwellings, and locations which they found upon the way. At last Mrs. Stafford found one which delighted her exceedingly, and after the Captain had stopped to allow her to examine and admire it she exclaimed, "Oh! if I could only live there I would be perfectly satisfied." Whereupon the Captain turned into the inclosure and informed her that they were at home.

It was from this home—whence he could see the summits of the Graylock range apparently on a level with him at the west, and the valley of the Hoosuck nestling beneath them at the north, with glimpses of the vales at the south where rises the Housatonic—that Colonel Stafford went with the Berkshire men to the battle of Bennington, where he fought and was wounded. Let us hope that it was from this home that in the golden autumn days of 1801, three months after he had parted with his last acre of land—his neighbors and the old pastor, whom he had helped to bring from Rhode Island, at their head, carried the departed Colonel down the southern slope of the hill to the peaceful burying ground where his remains now repose.

At the southernmost foot of the hill, on a gentle eminence, around which curves a babbling, crystal-watered brook is one of the ancient burial places in Cheshire where sleeps this man, who according to the inscription on his tombstone, (a stone almost bowed to the earth as though it sought to keep closer company with the dust of him whom it commemorates, so that he who reads it must perforce kneel):

"Fought and bled in his country's cause at the battle of Bennington, and descended to his tomb with an unsullied reputation."

In front of him curves a splendid amphitheater of wooded hills, their forest covering almost unbroken, extending from Whitford's rocks on the east, to the high pinnacle of quartz which glistens like a jewel in the sun above the present village of Cheshire. Behind him rise the slopes of the hill which he surveyed and helped to clear and settle, great fields of pasturage from

which now almost every dwelling has disappeared ; but rarely vexed with the plough, and trodden but seldom by any feet save those of lowing kine and bleating sheep.

A great beech tree on the edge of the bank above the brook shades him from the morning sun, and so sequestered is the spot that at this moment a golden-winged woodpecker has her nest in a decayed portion of the tree, her notes the only sound but that of the rippling brook to break the absolute silence of his long home. A peaceful and an appropriate resting place for the patriot and the pioneer ; but one which might well receive some care from those who are enjoying the fruit of the labors and sacrifices of him and his associates.

In the lot of the Bennet family in this old graveyard we find many Quakers, and the quaint simplicity of the Quaker thought is shown in the inscriptions.

About the John Wells who died the 17th of the seventh month 1813, in the 69th year of his age, and Frances his widow who survived him, living to the advanced age of 98, there is this tradition :

Frances was a sister of Daniel Brown. These Browns were well to do people. John Wells had nothing but an honest heart, a clear head, and a strong arm with which to make his way. They were married against the wishes of her father and family. So distasteful was the match that she was refused even the smallest setting out. So with nothing but themselves and their love the newly wedded pair, mounted upon one horse and with no other worldly goods, made the journey from Rhode Island to New Providence. Another sister married Caleb Tibbets, who was accounted well off and who also removed to New Providence, but remained only a short time, returning to the older settlements where he could enjoy more of the luxuries of life. He took back the opinion that probably Mr. and Mrs. Wells would get along, as Wells had made a clearing, put up a log house, and had one cow. The years passed by; John Wells worked his farm by daylight and made shoes by fire light. Frances Wells managed the house and the dairy, and earned money as a tailoress. They added farm to farm, and accumulated money until, when John died, his estate was one of the most considerable in Berkshire county, and with all this, both Frances and himself had gained the respect of all. Meantime, poor Caleb Tibbets had wasted his substance, and it was found that the daughter who had ridden portionless away behind her lover had made the better match.

Leaving this quiet burial place, let us retrace our steps to the old Bennet house, one of the few original ones yet remaining, and follow the road leading from it to the north along the western side of the hill. We shall not pursue it a great distance before we shall cross the line which marks the

southern boundary of the New Providence Purchase, the old north line of No. 4, or Windsor, and a continuation easterly of the old north line of New Framingham, or Lanesborough. It can be traced on the ground at present for miles to the westward until it disappears at the summit of the hill lying to the west of Cheshire. On our right rise the grassy slopes of Stafford's Hill, a few apple trees on the summit being all that from this point is visible to indicate that it has been the site of a village. On the left rises Mount Amos, wooded on its northern slope, but clear and smooth on its southern, where, among the maple trees, the early settlers used to keep the sugar boiling while the wolves howled around the fires in the night. Far below, at the north, is the Adams valley and, perhaps, a mile in advance of you, if your eyes are keen, you can see rows of white stones by the roadside, another resting place of these first settlers of New Providence. It occupies a little plateau with but a gentle slope toward the west, the road sweeping around it down the hill with a dark, solemn spruce tree standing in the background.

It was here that these Rhode Islanders of the Baptist denomination planted their first church and set up the public worship of God. No trace remains upon the spot of the ancient building, nor any mark by which to fix its location, but tradition says that it was next to the road and that its site is now occupied by graves.

The building, however, is now standing on the northern slope of the hill to which it was removed, and where, as a two-story red farm house, it still does duty in the cause for which it was framed and raised. It has changed its uniform, but still does service in sustaining the preaching of the word in the New Providence Purchase.

Before we enter this village of the dead, let us gather something of the work which they who rest there did in the foundation and maintenance of a church which has been the thing that, more than anything else, must have educated the men and women of Cheshire and moulded the life of the town. The New Providence Purchase, not having been constituted as a district, or to worship by itself, or included in the limits of any such community, was not under the obligation ordinarily imposed, of devoting a portion of its land to the support of the ministry, or of maintaining public worship. Whatever its inhabitants did in the cause of religion was, therefore, a free gift, and was done because of the moving of the Spirit. As before stated, many of the more prominent of the early settlers were Baptists. They had no thought of escaping the burden of supporting public worship, and the story of the church that they founded is best told by its records. These records are in the possession of Mr. Shubael W. Lincoln, whose house, in the extreme easternmost part of Cheshire, on the mountain side opposite the north slope of the Stafford Hill, looks across to Graylock. \* \* \* Mr.

Lincoln has gathered together many documents and relics of this early church and its members, and many a tradition of its early history.

Elder Peter Werden continued to be the pastor of this flock for nearly 40 years, until his death, on the 21st of February, 1808. He was a remarkable man; somewhat unlettered, perhaps, but full of grace and zeal, and actuated by love of God and man. His epitaph is said to have been composed by himself before he left Coventry. The discipline of his church was strict, and it cannot be doubted that its work was of the utmost importance to the well being of the community. An unbroken service, that spanned a century, was devoted to religious uses by a modest donation, a fact from which the charitably inclined may take courage.

As we have seen, the proprietors of the purchase were not obliged to devote a part of it to the support of the gospel: but Nicholas Cook and Joseph Bennet learning that a church had been thus founded at New Providence, gave by deed\* on the 17th of January 1770, 50 acres of their best land on the northern slope of the hill to Joab Stafford, in trust as a ministerial lot or glebe land for the support of a preacher of the Anabaptist denomination.

Upon this land lived Elder Peter Werden, and from it he obtained his subsistence. He was succeeded in the ministry by Elder Braman, and he by Elder Bross, described as a stirring practical man, under whose administration the old church building was removed to the glebe land, a new church having been erected sometime before on the top of the hill where was a flourishing and beautiful village—the village of Cheshire. It had besides its church its post office and its masonic lodge. Of all the buildings which then crowned the summit of the hill not one remains. The new church decayed and fell, and most of the farm houses were removed to Adams, and after a time the church organization became moribund. Elder John Leland supplied the pulpit for some time, but was never settled as pastor of the church. Elder Sweet also preached for them after the destruction of the new church building. However, a claim was made by the heirs of the donors of the glebe that the condition of the deed of trust had been broken, and the land forfeited. This claim was successfully resisted in the courts, and Shubael W. Lincoln appointed trustee. He now holds the trust, and applies the income of the fifty acres to the support of preaching in the school house hard by, looking hopefully for the time when he may see a tasteful chapel again crowning the old hill.

Let us enter the sacred ground and spend a few minutes with the pastor and his flock. But we must first record an episode of their work and discipline which throws light upon the manner of men they were and the views they held. Col. Samuel Low was one of the most wealthy and prominent

\*The copy of this deed verbatim is in Barker's article on the early settlement, page 85.



of those who founded the settlement and its church. His residence was nearest its site. In 1763 he was entrusted with the duty of organizing a lottery to raise and grade the streets of Providence, Rhode Island. In New Providence he owned slaves—four at least—William Dimon, Molly Dimon and their two children, one of whom was Antony. About 1790, he removed to Palatine, New York, having freed old William and Molly, but taking Antony and the girl with him. He afterward applied to the church for dismissal, but it was refused unless he would free the two slaves. A long correspondence between him and Elder Werden ensued of which this is a sample :

“DEAR BROTHER—We received your letter and the brethren hath heard it red. That part that concerneth Antony and it doth not serve our minds. Our minds is that your duty was to have set him at liberty at the age of twenty-one which was about a year ago. And as to the bills of cost that you speak of you and he must settle that yourselves. We look upon it that we have nothing to do in that matter. We wish you, very dear brother, to attend to the proposition that you mentioned—all men are born free. Therefore our request and desire is that you liberate him immediately to ease our sister and ourselves of our pain, as we think it will dishonor our profession if it is not dun. \* \* \*

ADAMS, MARCH 2d, 1792.

It may be well here to refer to a brief account of Elder Peter Werden, given by Elder John Leland in his works :

“Here lies the body of Peter Werden, late pastor of the Church of Christ in Cheshire. He was born June 6th, 1728. Converted by the mighty power of God in the Lord Jesus Christ May 9th, 1748. In the month of May 1751 he was ordained to the work of the ministry in Warwick, and continued measurably faithful in his pastoral charge to the close of his life, which was February 21, 1808.

His soul to God he used to send,  
To cry for grace for friend and foe,  
But blessed be the God of love,  
His soul is now with Christ above.

This crumbling sculpture keeps the clay  
That used to house the noble mind,  
But at the resurrection day,  
A nobler body he shall find.

Descending from the village of the dead toward the southwest the road passes around Mount Amos, and overlooks the valley in which is the present flourishing village of Cheshire. This village lies in the valley of the Hoosuck, and is in that part of the town formerly called Lanesborough. There was very early a road following the stream and leading from the center of the county to East Hoosuck. Crossing this is a road over the foothills of Graylock, from Lanesborough, and the present village has grown up at the four corners made by the intersection of these roads. When New Providence Hill was popular and flourishing it is said that there was not a

single house where the present village stands. It is difficult to trace the early settlement of this portion of the town, at least without more time than the present writer has been able to devote to the task.

The early settlers were citizens of a large town, the social and political center of which was over the hill to the west. They differed from the most of their fellow citizens in religious belief, and in the early records of the Six Principle and the Second Baptist churches would probably be the richest field for investigation as to their names and acts.

## CHAPTER I.

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### FROM 1767—1777.

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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, NEW PROVIDENCE. CAUSES PREVENTING THE SETTLEMENT OF BERKSHIRE. GEOLOGICAL FORMATION. EARLY SETTLERS. INCIDENTS OF THEIR JOURNEY THITHER. INVENTIONS AND INDUSTRIES. AMUSEMENTS. HIGHWAYS. SECOND BAPTIST CHURCH ESTABLISHED. INNS. STOCKBRIDGE CONVENTION. COLONEL PATTERSON'S REGIMENT.

We have, in our introductory chapter, given almost verbatim the interesting article from the pen of Judge Barker of Pittsfield, in which he tells us of the little band of pioneers coming through the hostile wilderness from Rhode Island, and building for themselves and families a home upon the hill-top, which, as a quaint old chronicler has it, they named New Providence. "Partly in loving remembrance of the place of their nativity, and partly owing to the sweet Providence of God in prospering their undertaking." Here they established their church and sent for the pious Werden, their former pastor, who ministered to them in spiritual things until in 1808, the Master called him home. The following is a list of the members of this church in the wilds of Berkshire, the First Baptist Church of the present Cheshire, as they came from Coventry: Rev. Peter Werden, Eunice Bennet, Joab Stafford, John Lee, Betsy Read, Samuel Low, John Bucklin, Deliverance Nichols, Joseph Bennet, Mercy Werden, Martha Lee, John Day, Alma Low. These members organized the church August 28th, 1769, and Elder Peter Werden, of Warwick, became their pastor in March, 1770.

The discipline of this church was strong, and on the pages of their books, yellow with time, we find, in characters that seem stern and stiff as the writers, these records:

"Brother B. was brought before the church for his disagreeable conduct in his disguising himself with spirituous liquors, and quarrelling in Col. Remington's tavern."

"Sister Mehitable B. was admonished for withdrawing herself from the church, and going into vain company of merrymen, and refusing to return."

"The church voted for admonishing George and Johanna his wife for their forsaking their travel with the church, and falling into idolatry."

"To Brother and Sister Joseph and Unice Bennet, and Sister Hannah Warren, they publicly declare that they cannot walk with the church because of their leaning toward that remarkable woman, generally known as Mother Ann, and said to be the *Queen* at the right hand of Christ, to whom, the church conclude, her followers go to confess their sins."

Judge Barker has left but little for us to tell of the New Providence, or, as it is more familiarly known, the Stafford's Hill settlement. The hill, surrounded by towering mountain peaks, remains the same as of yore. The summer sun shines upon the meadows, the glebe land is still cultivated, and its earnings cast in as a tithe for the Great Master; but the houses are deserted or removed, even the ancient church, as such, exists no longer, while pastor and flock lie, with folded hands, in the silent city on the hill, where the roll of carriage wheels is never heard, and the low doors of the houses open no more for the inhabitants. The store, the forge, the school house, are all gone from this Berkshire hill-top, and over the hills, along the winding valley road to the west, we find another village, gray with age and whispering of ante-revolution days.

Around every new genesis clusters a deep interest, strengthened as years pass on, and the drowsy indistinctness of age places the facts connected with it nearly beyond our reach. To gather some facts relating to these people who came from the smiling farms of Rehoboth and Warwick to the wilds of Berkshire, and securely garland them ere they slip forever from this generation, is what we hope to do.

With such merciless cruelty did the savage foe meet the pale-face coming to his country, that it was one hundred years after that grim December day, that Miles Standish and Mary Chatworth stepped from their tiny shallop onto Plymouth Rock, ere the Hoosacs were reached and crossed.

The county of Berkshire was the last settled in Massachusetts, a fact due to a variety of causes. The common claim laid to boundary lands was due largely, to the ignorance of English Kings and Dukes concerning America. In almost every case the different nations took possession, in the beginning of tracts extending from the Atlantic to the Pacific, and from the St. Lawrence to the Gulf of Mexico, giving land reaching from the Hudson to the Delaware to one party one day the next conveying land extending from the Connecticut to the Delaware to another, thus making conflicting claims inevitable.

Berkshire County was far remote from civilization, rough and rocky in its surface, and covered in places with dense forests. The boundary line between it and New York was unsettled. The Dutch already located on the Hudson with a prospect of moving eastward, were a powerful and disa-

greeable neighbor that the English dreaded and disliked. The French with their Indian allies, coming from Canada by the way of Lake Champlain and the Hudson, found easy access to the county by following the Hoosac River.

The ever-dreaded, fierce Huron-Iroquois traveling along the line marked by Fort Massachusetts, and sister forts to the Connecticut, could easily turn aside for a day and put the settler to the tomahawk and the torture. All agree that Indians often traversed this region. All believe that they came in bands at different seasons to hunt the game, native to the wilds, and catch the fish that flashed in the crystal streams. Many, however, claim that these children of the forest never made the county, in its northern half, an abiding home.

On the border line, between New Framingham and the present town of Cheshire, the bodies of two red men were found, evidently murdered; but it was at an early period, and they were doubtless two hunters who had strayed from some distant tribe. On the farm owned by Mr. Ira Richardson was a meadow to which the name of the "Hut Meadow," was given because there were so many evidences found there of its having been occupied at some remote time as a camping-ground by the Indians. Perhaps their wigwams were erected here during some summer season while the braves followed the hunt or fished in the mountain streams, possibly the dusky squaw turned over the earth, and sowed her corn which she gathered before they left the meadow on the Hoosac in the fall. However this may be, many weapons of their crude manufacture have been plowed up as the farmer turned the furrow along the "Hut Meadow;" and one day, when at work there, a tall Indian, wrapped in his blanket, appeared upon the scene, stalked across the field, seated himself upon the hillside just beyond, and sat in stoical silence, gazing upon the river and the meadow, brooding over some past memory, and apparently recalling a time when to his fathers belonged the river and the valley. He came in silence, and departed as he came with no word of explanation.

During the war between George II. of England and the French—known as the French and Indian war—which ended with the peace at Paris in 1763, large bodies of troops passed over the line through this county on their way to the northward. This movement tended to aid in settling the hitherto unknown land—large tracts of which were bestowed upon companies and individuals as a compensation for hardships endured and services rendered the government. The wave that began at that period to rise, flowed into Berkshire county, carrying on its billow the advance guards, who on the outposts of civilization prepared the way for thousands more to follow.

The face of the country, around the town of which this history tells, is uneven, but it is a picturesque and an arable succession of hill and dale with smooth uplands sweeping up to the feet of the wooded mountains. The distinct ranges are the Hoosac on the east, and the Taconics on the west, with hoary old Graylock looking down the valley. The southern and principal branch of the Hoosac—or as the Indians had it—the “*Ashuewiticook*,” flowed through the meadows, golden with flowers, when the settlers first located their lands in the valley, choosing the sunny fields and low lying hills rather than the wind-swept pastures on the high hill-tops.

This river is an important one on account of its descent, and frequent overflowings caused by heavy rains, melting snows and the rapid rising of many mountain brooks tributary to it. The overflow enriches the fine alluvial meadows which are especially adapted to the growth of grass, while the higher lands produce corn, rye, barley, sometimes wheat and tobacco. Roaming through the forests, and over the mountains were the bear, the deer and wolf. The fox was often roused from his lair, woodchucks burrowed in their holes, squirrels hopped from branch to branch, and chattered along the forest paths. Muskrats, minks and weasels builded their homes unmolested. The porcupine was sometimes seen on the dusty hills, and the terrible wild cat crouched at night on the boughs of the forest trees. Wild turkeys made their nests in the meadow-grass, and the kingfisher laid her eggs in the deep holes she made along the river bank; the loons called their mates from the shores of the ponds. The gray eagle perched on the lone rocks. The summer birds sang in the sunny fields, the red headed woodpecker tapped at the trees, the partridge drummed in the smoky dells, and the lonely note of the whippoorwill sounded at sunset as it did in far away Rehoboth. The fire-fly glimmered at night, the locust and grasshopper frequented their fields of grass, oats and buckwheat, sometimes committing great depredations.

Except a small tract along the Hoosac the whole town belongs to the primitive formation. No animal or vegetable remains have ever been found in its rock and strata. Mica, slate and limestone are the principal rocks. Quartz is found in quantity, forming huge beds of sand said to be the finest the world knows. Iron ore is also found. Potter's clay is common in stream and low ground.

It was during the next few years after the forming of the New Providence settlement that the Browns, Barkers, Angels, Comans, Whipples and others purchased the lands in the valley. In 1768 the fresh genesis commenced. A band of Puritan neighbors, yeomanry and gentlemen, left their comfortable homes in Rhode Island, and made their way, largely on foot, sometimes with ox sleds or carts, for horses were a luxury that but few could com-

mand. Now and then one rode away on horseback. As far as the Connecticut River their path was plain, from this point they struck out through the unfrequented ways of the tangled forests, following Indian trails, and river courses, blazing the trees as they journeyed, until they reached the site of the present town of Cheshire, approaching it by its eastern hills or from the south, following up the Housatonic. Overcoming the fear of the malarial fogs that rose in the valley, and which had influenced their predecessors to halt on Stafford's Hill, they immediately purchased the low lands then open to settlement, built their camp fires, cut down the trees, builded their houses, and commenced life in the rough. The following notice of some of these settlers is an extract from Judge Barker's paper:

"Elisha Brown of Warwick seems to have been the earliest to remove. His deed of lot No. 46 in the 2d division North Range bears date Oct. 6th, 1767, while Daniel Brown of Warwick, the more prominent man and largest land owner, bought No. 45 the following March. John Tibbits also of Warwick took the north lot of No. 70 in April 1769, and Abeather Angel of Scituate, R. I., the easternmost lot 63 in Sept. 1771. Thomas Matthewson of Warwick the west lot 52 in the second division May 1772, and James Barker of Middletown, R. I., and John Barker of Newport, R. I., (brothers) parts of lots Nos. 21 and 76, June 9th, 1773, and Benjamin Ellis of Warwick, Lot 41 in 1774. In the same section were John Lyon, who came from Fairfield, Conn., in April 1770, and his son Dr. John Lyon (afterwards doctor of Cheshire), born at Danbury, Conn., in 1756 and who must have removed to Berkshire with his father. The son is said to have been one of the Berkshire boys at Bennington. He lived for many years at the old gambrel roofed home under the elms at the forks of the road near the crossing of the Kitchen brook in the south part of the present village. This home was built about 1769 by John Tibbits, father of George and Henry Tibbits afterward wealthy merchants of Albany and New York. James Barker who had been one of the Court of Assistance in Rhode Island, and was made one of the Justices of Common Pleas in Berkshire soon after his removal to the county, lived on the spot now occupied by the widow of Noble K. Wolcott, just north of Dr. Lyon's.

He seems to have been an active man in public affairs, and was one of the early registers of deeds in the northern registry district, and the first town clerk of Cheshire upon its incorporation as a town. In the probate office are many wills of his drafting in a handwriting closely resembling that of the present clerk of the courts.

In the practice of Justice of the Peace, and neighborhood counsellor he seems to have been succeeded by his son Ezra, to whom he willed his homestead, and who was known to a later generation of Cheshire's people, as the old Squire Barker. He died in 1796.

John Barker who came with James from Rhode Island, removed from Cheshire in 1786, with his family and several of his neighbors, intending to settle in Killington, Vermont, but died upon the journey, at Woodstock. His family returned to Berkshire. These men were descended of the James Barker who is named as one of the grantees of the Rhode Island Charter from King Charles II."

James Barker had served five years in the French and Indian War, sometimes called King George's War, and lasting from 1754 to 1763. A war



that gave Canada and the Mississippi valley east of the river to the English. Ten years later in 1773 James Barker directed his way toward Berkshire. To quote from his journal, kept from day to day by his own hand, and for many successive years :

"I sent up my eldest son with wife and children. One pair of oxen, one old mare, and a cow and a bull. I also sent my second son to build me a house on my northernmost farm. In May following I sent the biggest part of my household goods, and on the 20th of same month set off with my family and some goods for Providence to proceed for Lanesborough.

I arrived there on the 1st of June, 1773, with my wife and children, and goods all well through the goodness of God. I brought up with me two cows and a bull, two heifers, a mare and a horse. I brought a letter of connection from Elder Thurston's church to Elder Nathan Mason's in Lanesborough and New Providence, and was received into that church with my wife also. My wife, and children, and myself had small-pox at the pest house.

June 27. I bought 200 acres of land of Jacob Bacon for which I am to pay £300 lawful money all in less than six months."

As has been stated Squire James Barker died in 1796, and his position as justice and village advocate fell with the homestead upon his son Ezra of whom to this day people speak as "Old Squire Barker."

The first Barker who ever came to America shipped in 1636. The granddaughter of this man married the falconer of King Charles I., and the picture of the royal falconer, dressed as retainers at the Court of the Stewart were wont to dress, with the falcon on his shoulder is held as a precious heir loom by the descendants.

James Barker coming into the colony when in its first decade had a wide opportunity of influencing those around him, and of shaping the interests and principles of the infant settlement. He was deeply interested in all religious moves, was for many years standing clerk in the church, where many a letter extant shows the vigorous intellect and wide knowledge of the man. John Bucklin from Coventry bought a farm at New Providence and his descendants have always been owners of the soil in the vicinity through successive generations. Many interesting stories are told by these emigrants of their journey thither, and their first experiences.

A man, moving with wife and child, drove an ox team upon which were loaded the household goods, while the wife with the little one in her arms rode on horseback. One afternoon the roads were rough, and the progress slow for the loaded team so that as night fell the wife found herself farther in advance than she had supposed. In vain she called her husband's name, in vain listened to hear his voice, or the sound of the lumbering wagon; but instead of these welcome noises she heard, as it grew dark in the forest, the baying of hungry wolves and knew they were on her trail. Dismounting and fastening the terrified horse, she gathered knots of wood, and piling

them high around her horse, herself and baby, she set them on fire, and by replenishing at intervals kept the coward horde at bay until almost day dawn when her husband joined her.

Caleb Brown built his log house upon the spot where Mr. C. J. Reynolds now lives. During the first winter the wolves carried off his calves and sheep. He was compelled to gather his stock into a rudely constructed shed, and build nightly a fire to shield them from the foe. One night, through the detention of some of the family and neighbors away from home, the sheep were not properly put in the fold, and fell a prey to the wolves again, which was a loss very deeply felt. The log house put up by Mr. Brown was on the opposite side of the street from the present dwelling and for the first few years the children with the grown people occupied one end of the building, the sheep, lambs, and calves the other.

In the house afterward erected on the knoll, Caleb Brown reared his large family. The house remains virtually the same, a large apple orchard was set out in the field beyond it, and each child possessed a tree named for itself, there was the Caleb tree, and the Russel tree, and Lois, and Amy, and Lydia, and so on throughout the large number. The trees are growing still.

A natural curiosity in the shape of a huge rock, or pile of rocks, is shown just south of this building and on the farm. Thrown up in the meadow in some convulsion ages ago, great trees have taken root in the crevices and are growing green and strong there, a winding way leads around the rock, uncertain and dizzy, but takes the pedestrian to the top from whence the view in a clear day is a very extended one.

Jonathan and Shubael Willmarth were among the emigrants who came up in 1767, and shared the fortunes of the New Providence settlers; but it appears that when Adams set about obtaining an act of incorporation it was the wish of the New Providence people to be incorporated with that town. The proposition for some unknown reason was not entertained, and Adams was incorporated as a town by itself in 1778. At the first town meeting men were chosen to office whose names had heretofore been on the records at New Providence—notice Capt. Phillip Mason, Capt. Reuben Hinman, and about this time the Willmarths are found in Adams, where they probably remained, but were taken back to the old spot for burial, from which one can conclude that they retained their relations with Elder Werden's church. In 1780, New Providence was actually incorporated with Adams.

Stephen Carpenter as well as the Willmarths was from Providence, belonged to the same church, and was one of the strong men of the colony. He did not stop at the hill proper, but took up land farther to the west in

the grant. John Lippit cleared a farm not far from the church land. He was from Scituate, R. I. None of his descendants remain.

Another of the very early settlers here was Stephen Northrop, who came from Danbury, Conn. He was a young man, not yet married. Entering town over the Lanesborough mountain he took up the land so long known as the Northrop farm which the family have always owned and inhabited until 1880. For three successive generations the eldest born was Stephen. Young Northrop, looking around upon his possession, decided to put up a log house near where the brook was flowing along over the pebbles, and commenced so to do, but he was soon called upon by some of his neighbors asking him to build higher up on the land, as they wished to lay out the road near the site he had chosen. This he consented to do and made the change at once. The wolves, hungry and fierce, barked around the place as soon as the sun went down, making doleful music for the young man—all alone. The fire blazed brightly amid the trees all night through; but the wolves got bold and howled in spite of the precautions used, advancing nearer and nearer the hammock of pine boughs. Necessity always invents; so it occurred to Mr. Northrop to construct a box in which he could sleep and be safe from his skulking visitors. At nightfall he built his fire and repairing to this somewhat crude bed slept in safety.

Israel Cole, coming up with his wife and small children, one an infant in arms, for some cause strayed from the main band of neighbors in whose company they were journeying, and as the afternoon closed, the clouds darkened, and flurries of snow filled the air. The forest leaves scudded before the mountain gale, and together with the winds, the snow whitened track, and the anxiety caused by their separation from the party, they lost their trail, and found to their dismay that they were going—they knew not where. The wife was riding upon the pony, the infant of the flock in her arms, wrapped about in shawls and wraps to protect its tender frame from the inclement night. After turning, and changing, and wandering, here and there to find the trail, rapidly grown more hidden beneath the snow, the mother finally dismounted, tethered the pony and laid the baby, all wrapped about and fast asleep, beneath a tree, that she might better assist in finding the way. After a long and tedious search in the darkness the trail was found and all things made ready for the onward march, when lo! No baby could be found. With eager hearts, and hasty steps, up and down the forest paths they wandered, these two, but could find no black eyed baby. Weary, cold, and heavy hearted, they sat down for a single moment upon the trunk of a fallen tree to devise some plan of action. Through the dim woods they heard that mournful sound the pine trees always make, and the echos of the rising storm rose and fell like a dirge. Suddenly, to

their ears, on the wintry wind came a noise so sweet that they forgot the cheerless night, and springing to their feet followed the call. Only the cooing of a baby—that was all. For mothers it would be needless to paint the rapture with which this one gathered the lost baby in her arms. For others, it would be useless, as they could not understand it, but these parents never forgot the tall beech tree near the Savoy line where in the November storm they laid their baby.

In 1768, Jonathan Richardson came from Newton, with two sons, one 14 and the other 9 years of age. The father rolled up a log house, felled some trees, put in some crops, and left the brave little fellows to do the farming. They managed the place, milked the cow, tunneled troughs of the basswood tree, in which they stirred the cream for butter.

The wild beasts howled at night around the little log cabin, there were no near neighbors: but on this place—a place now owned by Mr. Frank Wood—these brave boys remained alone, until the coming of the parents the following fall. At that time Mr. Richardson brought the remainder of the family, and the household goods on an ox cart, occupying five days in the journey.

Deacon Squire Monroe was a man of note, whose name is found often upon the church books, having joined the Stafford's Hill church at an early day. He hired fifty acres of land in New Framingham, where he brought his family in 1779. On his way he, with his goods, through some accident, was thrown into the Connecticut river. Narrowly escaping with his life, he sacrificed some of his goods and all of his money, ten dollars in silver; so that he was forced to accept charity until he could locate himself, and commence a course of labor that would bring remuneration. He was successful, as the world went then, and it so happened that when the country began to grow, and lands in central New York were offered for sale, a neighbor of Deacon Munroe's caught the western fever, sold his little farm, half way up the mountain side, and removed to Elbridge, N. Y. The country of course was new and unbroken. Fever and ague lurked behind every tree, and shook its yellow banners at every fireside. The weevil destroyed the first crops and the rain drowned out the second. The family grew very sick of their bargain, and pined for the healthy mountain breezes and pure spring water that bubbled up in a crude trough by the door of the little red farm house they had left behind. So returning in the fall for a visit, they took tea, one day, with neighbor Munroe; the bent of the conversation turning upon the mistake the farmer had made in going west; he was full of regrets and complaints and wished that he had never made so unwise a move, when Deacon Munroe exclaimed, "Well, well, neighbor C., I'll tell you what I'll do. I'll take your western farm off your hands without seeing it, and you may take mine; even swap all round. Will you do

it?" extending at the same time his hand for a hearty shake on the trade. The visitor looked at him in surprise, saw that he was in earnest, and seizing the proffered hand said: "Yes, I'll do it, of course I will, and glad of the chance." "Well, well, then it's a bargain. Wife, pack up, you and the children." And without farther ado the Munroes were off for their new home, among the fair meadows and productive fields of New York, where a fortune awaited them, and where Deacon Munroe lived to be associated with many a good deed and work, where he served the Empire State in her councils, and died leaving a fair inheritance to his numerous boys and girls, while the discontented neighbor lived out his days on the little mountain farm, making a living and laying aside a few hundreds by dropping the pennies so far down in the depths of his long purse that they did not easily find their way out.

Although no Indian massacres befell these early settlers, as had fallen to the lot of their more easterly brothers, the settlement of a new country, remote from an old one, is ever rife with hardships. Food, raiment, necessary implements of labor must be obtained in small supplies and with extreme difficulty. The furniture of the tables consisted for many years of pewter dishes, of wooden plates, and cups made of gourds. Johnny-cake and mush were standard articles on the pioneer's table. With constant labor they, in time, overcame the wild grasses, destroyed the native weeds, and cultivated clover with different varieties of grass which covered the fields, and afforded fine pasturage for their cattle. They rarely killed lamb or calf for home consumption, so eager was their desire to stock the farms. These practical men soon learned that the location they had chosen was full of possibilities for a grazing and dairying country; but the most sanguine one among them all, probably, never dreamed of the manufacturing success that would be attained by some of the future inhabitants, a success made possible by the many wheels that would be turned by the little tumbling river, running so quietly between the alder trees. In the meantime their heroic hearts quailed sometimes, when the fruits of toil went down in a single night from causes beyond their control. Prowling wolves devoured their flocks, wild storms swept across the country crushing their fences and admitting animals to tread the valued crops beneath their tramping feet. Again they would be stolen by thieving crows or squirrels, while sometimes foxes, running mad, appeared among their cattle, snapping, snarling and biting. The way looked dark, and the pioneer farmer wondered how he was to provide for the little ones coming so rapidly to his cabin home.

Each farmer had his mark for the animals that browsed in the open country through the summer; this mark was branded upon the back or clipped in the ear, and by it the owner claimed his property in the fall.

Reviewing the history of these people many queries arise. How did they grind their corn? for they must have mush and Johnny-cake. How did they make their leather? Where were the smithies? for horses must be shod, and tools must be mended. What of shoemakers, millers, tailors, weavers and furniture makers? Saw mills were a first necessity, water power was plenty, therefore they were the first industries established, and grist mills followed. At Pontoosuc pond was the nearest grist mill for the Stafford's Hill settlement: the way was long and the settlers improvised circular tin graters, then they pounded their corn in an iron mortar with a pestle, which was succeeded by circular stones after which it is said that the first water wheels were patterned and called "Tub Mills."

The climate demanded warm clothing for many months; every housewife was familiar with the loom, and kept the spinning wheel running. Most thrifty people dressed in homespun. A blue and white checked linen, home woven, was a common dress among the women in summer, replaced by flannel in winter. They raised their own flax and reared their sheep.

The manner of living was well calculated to develop the original, inventive power of people, and in every neighborhood was sure to dwell some whose native ability allowed them to carry on successfully the different crafts, and as no person has every gift, in the diversity, by an exchange all could be provided for. Women were usually the tailoresses; some one who could fit well went from house to house cutting and preparing the coats, vests and pants, and was followed by a woman with her "goose," who staid until all were made. The shoemaker, bearing his kit, (meaning a shoe-bench with waxed ends, awls, brads and the tools necessary for the manufacture of a shoe,) went his rounds every fall. Fixed in some out of the way corner, he pegged and sewed and whistled until all the feet were shod. This they called "Whipping the Cat."

Every family tanned its own leather. Cutting down a huge tree they made of it a trough, which they sunk in the ground to the upper edge; this was the tan-vat. While clearing the land there was no trouble in securing the bark in a sufficient quantity, which was dried, then on cloudy days when the boys could not work out of doors, they pounded and shaved it on a big block of wood. Ashes were applied to the skins to remove the hairs in place of lime. The blacking was made of soot from the chimneys mixed with lard. Possibly, when finished, the leather was a trifle coarse, but it was good and wore admirably.

Everything at first—pork, sugar, teas, household furniture, etc.,—must be brought from beyond the Connecticut, often strapped on horseback, packed in saddle bags, sometimes by ox teams which made them all expensive luxuries. In the spring time the maple trees were tapped, the iron

kettle hung on the crane or the arched branches in the woods, and a supply of sugar and molasses made. In the fall, if the sugar cask ran low pumpkins were boiled down and the quantity thus increased.

Working with the few and awkward tools they could command, they achieved wonderful things, and those who live to-day look in silent admiration upon the articles that now and then come to their notice. The maple was their favorite wood. Their floors manufactured of it were neat and lasted well. Their looms were somewhat heavy perhaps, but they answered every purpose. The ploughs with their wooden mouldings would scarcely do a farmer now, but they turned the furrows well; the harrows with their wooden teeth, the long flails, and sleds for winter use were well made. Sometimes now, beneath the roof of a gray old barn, hanging in some sly corner, one spies a flail, or scythe, or harrow, covered with the dust and cobwebs of years, and looks and wonders as he thinks of the hand that fashioned and wielded them.

The women requiring saleratus for their short-cake had no way of procuring it; baking powder or soda they had never heard of, but they knew a way that their grand-daughters have never been quick enough to think of. They boiled lye and salt together, put them in a bottle and when they evaporated, behold! a saleratus, or, as they named it, pearl ash, which answered all their needs. Others burned cobs, and procured the same result from the ashes, called cobash.

Furniture was difficult to manage. Kitchens were generally provided with benches and a wooden settle, this latter was long with high back and ends, the seat opened on hinges and revealed a box where wood was kept in winter; a pine table, looking glass, and never failing dye tub of indigo blue stowed in a warm corner completed the list. In the parlors were straight-backed, wooden chairs, table, looking glass, a sanded floor, and if the family was "forehanded," a chest of drawers and a bedstead. Sometimes white curtains were used for the windows, but green shades were more common, manufactured of strips of basswood, cut thin and exactly the width of the window to be curtained. A woof was drawn into the loom and these strips woven with it, care being taken to have a plain piece at the top and bottom of each shade that it might be properly hemmed.

Stoves were not used. Huge fire places occupied nearly one side of the kitchen, and often on a cold winter's night when a great fire was needed the farm horse was chained to a big log and driven into the kitchen where before the fire place the log was unfastened, placed across the andirons, and the gentle horse, thus released from his burden, driven from the door again. Back by the soot grimed chimney was a swinging crane from which hooks were suspended, where the kettles were hung to boil. Potatoes

were roasted in the hot embers drawn out upon the hearth. Johnny-cake was baked on a flat board before the red hot coals. Some housewives used a "tin kitchen," in which they baked pies, bread and cake. This was a sloping tin box with one side wholly open, and drawn up before the glowing fire, the opposite side and the ends were inclosed, while over the top was placed a cover when the dishes were baking. Others had a brick oven either in the chimney or out of doors in which great fires were made, and left to burn until the bricks that lined the oven were thoroughly heated. Then the coals and ashes were removed and the oven cleanly swept, ready for the long rows of pies, cake, bread, etc.

Matches were unknown. Fires were started by flint, or an old match-lock was often made to do duty in lighting the morning fire. Provided with dry whittlings, a bunch of tow and the old fire lock, or flint, a spark of fire would be obtained which touched to the tow would ignite at once. Sometimes by rubbing two sticks of punk together the spark was caught. The careful housewife covered the fire at night with ashes thus rarely allowing it to go out. Those who were more thoughtless sometimes found themselves with no fire on the hearth, no flint or punkwood. In such a case some of the children were bundled up, given an iron kettle with a cover and sent to the nearest neighbor with the message: "Please will you lend us a fire-brand?"

Among the dangers that awaited the backwoodsman, it is said, there were none greater than the falling of forest trees. Sometimes grown rotten with age, the branches weakened by storms, or made heavy by snow, the giant tree would stand until the jar caused by the hunter's tread would be sufficient to send it crashing through the air and upon the unsuspecting walker below. Sometimes in cutting down a tall tree the chopper would not run in the right direction, and overtaken by the heavy boughs, was killed outright, or so pinioned by them that he was powerless to escape.

During the first winter of the settlement while clearing land in the close vicinity of Stafford's Hill, one among some men who were felling a tree was killed in this way. His companions scooped out the trunk of a tree for a burial case, laid him in it, dug a grave in which at night they lowered the coffin, and lest it might be disturbed by prowling beasts or stray Indians, levelled it like a ploughed field and took turns in watching it for some nights.

The descendants of men who trod the decks of the Mayflower and the Speedwell could not be other than grim and austere. Rugged and angular as the encircling mountains, they were strict in morals. A man was not allowed to shoot on Sunday, and the tithing man collected his tax from any who travelled on that holy day save to the house of prayer. Wines and liquors were "set out," for one's friends, and drinking an every day



affair, still drunkenness, it is claimed, was not as prevalent as at the present time. Journeys were made on horseback. Ladies rode on a pillion placed behind the gentleman's saddle. This was considered decidedly grand.

The day on which the Governor was elected, called Election Day, and "general training" were days given to amusement, for although it was a grave thing to dwell under the blue laws of the Puritans, the young people had their sports. Thanksgiving Day itself must be spent demurely, given to prayer and praise, but the following day might be devoted to pleasure and frolic. Husking and paring bees, quilting parties and singing schools, were allowed, and after the ears of corn were husked, sometimes the fiddle's loudest notes sounded beneath the rafters of the huge barn, and many feet tripped in time to Money Musk, and whirled through Virginia Reel. So time passed on, and the fathers of the hamlet, after laying out their farms and erecting their houses, turned their attention to the making of highways. These were made with difficulty, usually along the hills and high grounds to escape the mud and marshes of the low lands. They were narrow and winding, following generally, some Indian trail or cow path or mountain way amid the rocks, trodden by the sheep of the early dwellers. Since that day many have been changed: some shortened by running along the river banks, some however, follow the hills, rocky and steep, as of old.

Among the first, surveyed as early as 1770, is that going north from New Providence Hill for a distance, then turning to the westward it ran along the northern line of Lanesborough as it was before the division of towns, and can be traced now over the hills beyond the present village of Cheshire. A road at a later date was surveyed that followed the brow of the hill to the south, descending into the valley of the Hoosac, where, making a direct westward turn it crossed the river and passed through the village. Keeping well to the north, it cut the lot now occupied by the residence of Mrs. R. C. Brown. On the right hand was the burying ground then in use, but of which no vestige remains, a field of grain and carefully tended garden marking the spot to-day. From this point the road climbed the westward hill close by what is known as the old grave yard. A line of bushes marks its course to-day as it went on through the land of Liberty Hammond, descended just beyond into a hollow among the hills to which the pioneers gave the name of "The Kitchen;" from thence on through Lanesborough, Hancock and Stephentown to the New York line. There was also a continuation of this road toward the east from Stafford's Hill, leading through Savoy, Plainfield and on to Northampton and Springfield. Although not a turnpike this was an important and much traveled road. Long before the whistle of the engine was heard in the valley it was the regular stage route from Albany to Springfield, on which a line of well filled coaches, drawn

by four horses, rolled along at a fine speed over the hard, white roads, stopping at the inns of the hamlets, and forming the sensation of the day.

At an equally early period a road from north to south was laid out. Striking the town at its southern line it run over the hills. The main road is used at the present as it was in early days, and is known as the "Old Road." A few cross lanes leading from it have been discontinued. It passed through the village, crossing the first road from east to west at right angles, thus forming the four corners, which gave the place the name of The Four Corners, or The Corners as an abbreviation. Going on to the north it passed around the valley, turned over the hills at the James Cole farm, and by the Fisk place, entered the south village in the town of Adams. The road that goes through the present village of Cheshire is just the same as when first laid out more than a hundred years ago, through the then wooded paths of New Providence Grant.

This village belongs to the "long ago," and as one walks down the quiet streets the thoughts revert to the anxious times of fear and care that marked its settlement. Many of the houses go back to the beginning of, and some precede the nineteenth century by many years. Occasionally one retains its great square chimney, its box-like entry, narrow windows and massive frame, and it is not difficult to see, in imagination, the tall forms of the pioneers, in their high hats, and swallow tailed coats, the first Stafford, Low, or Brown, Bucklin, Bennet, Wells, Barker, Richardson and all the rest, as they marched down this same street, or wended their way to the cold meeting house on Stafford's Hill, where was a line of comfortable farm houses, a big tavern, and some stores.

Around the corners clustered the new village as the old one at Stafford's declined. From the Kitchen, in the hollow, a country lane was opened with a northerly course, and joining the old road to Adams. This rejoiced in the euphonius title of "Pork Lane," and here for many years a gay portion of the young people were centered. Substantial farmers purchased the land all along this street, builded their houses, and reared their families, good old-fashioned families, they were too, seventeen and eighteen active boys and girls to a house. They were not afraid of sons and daughters in those days. In 1771 came Elder Nathan Mason of Swansey, Mass., with a band of twelve devoted brethren, brought back with him when he returned from his labors upon the bleak Nova Scotia coast, and finding six more Swansey brethren, believers in the same faith, he formed a church of eighteen members, which convened itself with the Rhode Island yearly meeting of Six Principle Baptists. The Sixth Principle made the laying on of hands after baptism requisite to communion.

On the then populous, "Pork Lane," they built their "meeting house," a

square, barn like building with benches, and three legged stools for seats, with no shades to temper the heat of the summer sun, or stoves to take the chill from the desolate room when winter gales were blowing. Just before the junction of the main street and "Pork Lane," they placed it, and of the character of the pioneer preacher, its founder, Elder Leland, a contemporary says:

"He was a man of peace and godliness, preaching seven days of the week by his life and conversation."

This church was known, when first organized as the First Lanesborough Baptist Church.

Inns were built at an early day. Colonel Remington and Captain Joab Stafford kept tavern in the thriving boro' on Stafford's Hill, and both, no doubt, found plenty of custom. Captain Stafford's tavern was on the very summit of the hill, on the site of the only dwelling house now standing. The Stafford House was a commodious one and its owner combined the occupations of farmer, storekeeper and landlord. In the newer village beginning to gather around the corners, Medad King established himself in a public house by the side of the highway leading down the valley from south to north, and along which emigrants to Vermont and Lake Champlain found easy travelling. Medad King's inn was a low, rambling building, with a large, grass plat before the door, and towering trees that cast their shadows over house and fields through the summer days. Built in 1768, it was one of the first frame houses and the very first inn at the new village.

Redeeming their lands from the wilderness, building houses, new settlers joining them, planning for meeting houses and schools, and for the future support of the gospel, time passed rapidly away, while the murmurings of discontent grew audible among the colonists, in consequence of the oppression of the Mother Country. Little by little the oppressive taxes placed upon the colonists had increased until they reached a culmination. Far away over the storm-tossed Atlantic, in the city of London, laws were made for them in which they had no part, and were not allowed representation. The scene in Boston Harbor at midnight, the closing of Boston as a port of entry, and troops in the uniform of King George, filling the streets of the city, told in unmistakable language of the approaching conflict. The discipline of the colonists, during the war only closed in '63, had been good, and taught them a spirit of independence which increased, now, with every added burden, so that when the call came at last, every patriot ear heard, and every patriot heart responded.

Delegates from all the towns of Berkshire were sent to a convention held in Stockbridge, in July, 1774. Cheshire, as a town, did not then exist, but was included in the towns of New Framingham (now Lanesborough), East

Hoosuck (now Adams), New Ashford and Windsor. To this convention, from Lanesborough, were sent as delegates, Gideon Wheeler, Peter Curtiss and Dr. Francis Guittau. From Adams, Elial Todd. At this convention they pledged themselves in behalf of their constituents to raise with the most prudent care, sheep and flax that they might be able to manufacture necessary cloth, and from all who refused to indorse the movement the patronage of the people should be withdrawn. If merchants, no article of British or East India goods should be purchased from them. They pledged and agreed that they would neither import, purchase or consume articles sent from Great Britain to America; a covenant that was literally observed. The women refused to use imported teas or *sale sugar*, using the herbs that grew upon their farms for the former and sugar made from maple syrup and pumpkins.

Neither did their patriotism exhaust itself in conventions and pledges. As news of the increasing strife of feeling reached the settlers, during all the long, cold winter the hardy backwoodsmen gathered around the mammoth fires of maple logs, and canvassed it as it came to them. Their hearts beat responsive as they declared their readiness to stand as *one man* against the oppressor, for the homes they were establishing. With the opening spring came the beginning of the conflict. Every body knows the story of Concord; everybody can tell the running fight of Lexington, and how the news flashed along the travelled roads and forest paths, repeating itself from hamlet to hamlet and from farm to farm, caught up by travellers along the green woods and told from point to point, it was not long in reaching the sturdy, frontier yeomanry, who with one accord gathered on the green to declare their determination to defend their rights, and thus enjoy the lands they had subdued, and the future for which they had so successfully laid the foundation.

The battle of Lexington was fought on the 19th of April, 1775. On the afternoon of the 21st the tidings reached Berkshire, and when the sun climbed the hills next morning it shone upon a scene of wild excitement in place of the clearings of the settlers in their usual peace and quiet.

Many of the New Providence and Lanesborough men added their names to the enlistment rolls, and some of them joined the regiment at Pittsfield, which, on the morning of the 22d, stood with muskets and uniforms in battle array, ten companies strong. It was officered by Colonel Patterson and reported at Cambridge. There were other voluntary enlistments for longer or shorter terms as the emergency seemed to demand.

All who were able were willing to defend their country. Women who could not go on to the battle-field turned from the sorrowful goodbye to husband, brother, or lover to finish the half-turned furrow, or put the crops

in the field, side by side with those who were too aged or infirm to join the warfare. This Berkshire regiment was employed at Bunker Hill, and from it men were drafted in the fall of 1775, to join the ill-starred expedition of Benedict Arnold. With such a fearless commander to lead they fought their way up the ice-bound Kennebec, across the desolate, unfriendly wilds from the scattered settlements in Maine to Canada.

After the disastrous battle of Quebec, with one commander slain upon the snow-whitened plains, bearing one disabled with them, and leaving the flag of the Briton to float undisturbed over all the Canadas, they slowly retreated to Crown Point and Ticonderoga. Isolated men were sent thence eastward to join Washington in his Christmas campaign, and participate in the brilliant battles of Trenton and Princeton. A glorious stroke by which Gen. Washington outgeneraled the great Cornwallis, and left him watching the camp-fires until the booming of cannon on the midnight air told him that "That Fox" had sprung from his lair, and with blanching cheeks he listened to Erskine, standing in the door of his tent and crying, "To arms! General, to arms! Fly to the rescue at Princeton." An exploit that would read well on the page of military history, side by side with the deeds of Alexander of Macedon or the great Napoleon. When we add that some of these heroes were in at the surrender of Burgoyne in the fall of 1777, it is surely a tale of glory sufficient for one soldier.

Among those who entered the settlement prior to the breaking out of the war was the family of Nathan Mason. Nathan, the father, never tried the new country, but his sons, Samson, Barnet, Jessie, Nathan, Levi, Pardon and Aaron made for themselves homes at New Providence or Lanesborough. These brothers, with the exception of Samson were in several engagements during the war of the Revolution and saw some severe fighting. Their names appear, again and again, upon the pay-rolls. They were in the hot fight at Bennington, and were so begrimed with the powder which covered their faces that they did not know one another when they met upon the field after the battle was over.

They were all at the Bennington fight, save Nathan who was unable to go in consequence of a lameness brought on by some rheumatic difficulty. Grave fears were entertained by some that if the British won the day they would advance across the border line into Massachusetts, and thus sweep on up the county of Berkshire. So the brothers, in a family conclave hastily gathered before leaving home, arranged with Nathan to hold the ox team in readiness, so that at a moment's warning of the approach of the dreaded foe he could gather in the capacious cart the members of the various families, and be off toward the south.

Samson Mason's name never appears in the annals of the town, either by

tradition or record; his stay was probably short. Pardon Mason returned to Providence. Of Aaron Mason there is nothing definite after his return from the war.

Barnet, Levi, Nathan, and Jessie Mason located on, or near "Pork Lane." Barnet married Biah Werden. Werden Mason was their son, who was father of Barnet, Calvin, John and Alden. Jesse<sup>1</sup> Mason, who lived upon the farm now occupied by Leroy Northrop, was the father of Nathan<sup>2</sup> and Sherborn. Nathan<sup>1</sup> Mason was the father of Abner, Nathan<sup>2</sup>, Barnet<sup>2</sup>, Isaiah, Eda, Desire.

Levi Mason married Amy Gilson, and their large family was reared in a house on the corner of "Pork Lane" and the main road, now owned by Liberty Hammond. There was Levi, Roswell, Silas, Pardon, Isaac and Arnold, Phelinda, Lovina, Laura, Lucinda, Merinda.

Nathan Mason<sup>2</sup>, son of Nathan<sup>1</sup>, married a daughter of James Mason, who had settled at the "Kitchen" a place where his son Joshua, and again his grandson Nathan lived upon the land, carried on the tanning business, and where, now, a member of the family in the fourth generation resides. Nathan Mason<sup>2</sup> was the father of Rev. Almond W. Mason, Dr. Ira N. Mason, Ethan A., Desire, and Robie.

Melancthon, son of Silas Mason, became a successful mechanical engineer, and was the inventor of the locomotive head-light. He had the supervision of the car shops of the New York Central Railroad at Auburn, for a long term of years.

## CHAPTER II.

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FROM 1777—1787.

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BURGOYNE'S ADVANCE. BAUM'S ATTACK UPON BENNINGTON. STARK'S CALL FOR BERKSHIRE MILITIA. COL. JOAB STAFFORD'S INDEPENDENT COMPANY. CAPT. SAM. LOW'S COMPANY. CAPT. DANIEL BROWN'S COMPANY. RICHARD STAFFORD'S ACCOUNT OF BENNINGTON BATTLE. ACCOUNT OF A TORY IN THE FORT. COL. STAFFORD, HENRY TIBBITS, CHESHIRE AT STONE ARABIA. CAPT. LOW'S COMPANY AT ST. CROIX. COL. STAFFORD RE-INFORCES COL. WARNER. CAPT. BROWN'S MARCH TO PAWLET. CAPT. BROWN'S COMPANY SENT TO NEW HAVEN. LIEUT. JEREMIAH BROWN'S COMPANY JOIN STARK AT SARATOGA. DEACON DANIEL COMAN. SAMUEL WHIPPLE, DEACON CARPENTER, STEPHEN INGALLS, DAVID DUNNELL'S RECORD. SHAY'S INSURRECTION. ANNEXATION OF NEW PROVIDENCE TO ADAMS. JOHN WELLS, DANIEL AND NATHAN WOOD, WILLIAM JACQUES.

It was August, 1777, that Gen. Burgoyne was toiling over the road from Ticonderoga to Albany, his objective point, and the city where, in the brilliant scheme he portrayed for the British Parliament, he was to meet the triumphant army of Clinton ascending the Hudson, and, thus uniting, crush the back bone of the rebellion by separating the eastern from the middle States.

His advance was laborious over the road blocked up by the enemy, and gave Gen. Schuyler ample time to gather the yeomanry to oppose his approach. Reaching Fort Ann, a point midway between Skeenesboro and Fort Edward, Burgoyne proposed to send a force of Brunswickers under Lieutenant Col. Baum to Bennington, to capture some stores that the Americans had concealed at that place. To this diversion his generals were positively opposed and advised pushing rapidly upon Albany, before Schuyler had sufficient time to gather his forces at the front. Burgoyne, however, was obstinate and would not change his plans. The magazine at Bennington must be surprised and captured, and at the same time his Brunswick dragoons remounted. In vain did Riedesel, the commander of

the Hessian allies, plead for the dragoons to be left behind on this mission, where everything depended upon light, swift action—in vain did Phillips suggest that the lightly equipped rangers would be the most efficient soldiers for the occasion. Against the urgent advice of Riedesel and Phillips the haughty, self-confident Burgoyne sent his order to Baum:

“You are to disconcert the enemy, to mount the Riedesel’s dragoons, to complete Peter’s corps, and to obtain large supplies of cattle, horses, and carriages. Your detachments must bring in to you all horses fit to mount your dragoons, also saddles and bridles. The dragoons themselves must ride and take care of the horses of the regiment. Scour the country from Rockingham to Otter Creek. The corps under *Mr. Warner* said to be at Manchester will probably retreat before you. Should any troops from *Mr. Warner’s* or *Mr. Arnold’s* army post themselves in an advantageous position to intercept you it is left to your discretion to attack them or not, always remembering that your corps is too valuable to let any considerable loss be hazarded on this occasion. *You will send off cattle or carriages to prevent being too much incumbered*, and will give me as frequent intelligence of your situation as possible. If, contrary to expectations, you are attacked send me the quickest intelligence, and you may *depend upon me to sustain you*. Go down the Connecticut River as far as Brattleboro. Send to me as prisoners all officers, civil and military, acting under Congress, and returning over the big road, meet me at Albany on the Hudson.”

“Britons never go back,” Burgoyne had said, as floating merrily down the Champlain, he looked with pride upon the flying colors, and glistening arms of his invading army—8000 strong. He anticipated no defeat.

In obedience to this great order, Baum and his men, dismounted dragoons and infantry, Hessians and Indians, marched across the Batten Kill through the pleasant summer weather, little dreaming of the fate to which they went, or how worthy was their foemen’s steel.

The Brunswick dragoons, clad in their leather jerkins, their high jack-boots, and tall hats, heavy with ornamental feathers, their massive carbines strapped across their shoulders, and unwieldly broad swords trailing at their sides, dragged along the dusty highway, encumbered by the flour they were compelled to carry, and the herd of cattle they drove for their daily maintenance. The result might have been foreseen. “Contrary to expectation,” *Mr. Stark* and *Mr. Warner* did not remain quietly at Bennington, and the Manchester Pass, and allow Baum and his heavy dragoons to sweep by them in safety. By a rapid and well concerted movement on the part of the Americans under these shrewd generals, Baum was cut off from his English allies, who fled, and left him and his awkward squad to their fate. Of 400 men, who halted on the hill at Bennington, with Baum, 360 were killed, and when Burgoyne gathered his army again on the other bank of the Hudson, he only needed twenty horses to mount all the dragoons that were left to that glorious army of the Britons who *never* went back.

The people of New Hampshire had sent Gen. Stark, who had so gallantly



maintained their honor at Bunker Hill, with a company of volunteers to check the progress of Burgoyne and guard the western frontier prior to any hint of this expedition.

It was on the 13th of August that Gen. Stark learned of the presence of a body of Indians twelve miles northwest of Bennington, and the same night was notified by an express messenger that a large force of British was in their rear. Stark sent upon the instant to Manchester for Warner's men, while relays mounted on the fleetest steeds fled along the country roads to bear the warning.

Living in the town called, now, New Ashford, near the foot of Graylock, was a patriot by the name of Tyler,—great uncle of Dr. Phillips of Cheshire—who as soon as the word reached the low farm house saddled his horse, and was off in the night, over the hills, down the stony mountain paths, through the country known now as Cheshire. A clatter of hoofs up the door yard drive, a knock at the door, a flash from the grated lantern, a word of warning. "The Regulars are advancing on the New York frontier." The place of rendezvous, was all that the dwellers by the way heard. It was all that they needed to hear, but it was enough to create the wildest commotion. In many a house the fire of pine knots was kept all night, and before it was melted all the family pewter, brought forward by anxious mothers and weeping wives, to be run into bullets for the coming conflict. Elder Peter Werden set the example of loyalty to his flock by sending three sturdy sons, Peter, Judah, and Richmond, with all the pewter teaspoons, and that this example was eagerly followed by his people the muster roll of Col. Stafford and Capt. Low abundantly proves. From Stafford's Hill went Daniel Reed, who had already participated in some of the most stirring events of the war, being one of the party commanded by Ethan Allen at the capture of Ticonderoga, and serving in the memorable expedition against Quebec under Arnold. His grandnephew, Steward White, still occupies the farm that he then owned. Before the dew was dry on the greensward beneath the tall trees that overshadowed the tavern of Medad King the boom of the signal gun announced to the eager watchers upon the hillsides, and in the valley that the moment for decisive action had come, and singly, or in squads of twos and threes with hastily seized guns the minute men were on their way to Bennington.

Squire Ezra Barker was at work in the field now occupied as a cemetery, and before the report had ceased he dropped his hoe, and with hasty steps went home for his gun and started alone. As he neared Pownal he met the women, children and old men, a panic-stricken crowd, fleeing in terror from the "Bloody Britishers," and his righteous indignation against the sanguinary foe burst forth in oaths which tradition says waxed fiercer and fiercer,

nor did they cease until the battle ground at Bennington was reached, and he could avail himself of a more effectual weapon than his tongue.

When numbered, Capt. Daniel Brown reported forty-six men from Lanesborough. Colonel Joab Stafford gathered an independent band of volunteers numbering forty-one, from New Providence, Lanesborough, East Hoosneck and Windsor, while "Captain Samuel Low took from New Providence forty-four men to Bennington battle." This same captain and company had been doing duty from the last day of June until the 4th of August, when they were summoned to Bennington at a place called St. Croix, on the Walloomsac, eighteen miles from home. The men were mustered in on the 14th, and were in service six days according to the pay rolls.

When Champlain turned his two pigmy ships from the Atlantic down the dark St. Lawrence, seventy years after Cartier had named the river, and the little Indian village on its banks, he could find no trace of town or people, but was captivated by the charms of the new country, and fired with the ambition to plant his religion upon the ground, and claim it for his sovereign. Many Jesuits, missionaries and teachers, followed in the wake of the explorer, and through the wilds of Canada and Vermont, they travelled along the Indian trails, planting the cross of the Nazarine wherever they could win the savage to listen to the story. Here, where the Walloomsac, the Hoosac and White Creek unite their waters, stood once the cross of the Jesuit who proposed to gather a flock and establish a mission. For a long time the white cross stood by these murmuring streams giving to the surrounding country the name of Saint Croix, according to the French Jesuits, and, becoming anglicized is sometimes called Sanerois, and even Sancook. The cross went down, at last, beneath the storms and gusts of the century, and a gristmill stood in 1777, near the junction of the waters.

On August 14th, the hasty march was made by the Berkshire men eager for the fray. At an early hour on the morning of the 15th, Capt. Brown called the muster-roll of his company. All day the storm beat and the rain fell, the woods were filled with waiting anxious Yankees, the Indians, frightened, ran away in groups of twos and threes. Colonel Baum sent a messenger to Gen. Burgoyne to tell him of the rising of the New Hampshire and Berkshire yeomanry, and Gen. Stark conducted himself like the spirited, vigorous man he was. His master mind influenced his men, and infused its spirit and bravery into them, making good soldiers of all, affording a brilliant exploit from its inception to its achievement, and sending Bennington Battle on to posterity as one of the most important of the American Revolution. Reviewing his troops, as over the hill to the left just appearing in sight the British Grenadiers were proudly marching, Gen. Stark, mounted

upon a bar of the rustic fence, and pointing with his long forefinger toward them, said with animation :

“There, boys, are our enemies—The Red Coats. We whip them to-day, my brave men; or Mollie Stark sleeps a widow to-night.”

We all know the oft-repeated story, and need no person to tell us that Mollie Stark did not buy her widow's weeds that day.

Where there are so many anecdotes and incidents of interest as cluster around the day of this battle the temptation is very strong to give more than can have room in the pages of a condensed history; but only those may be taken that are closely allied with Cheshire at Bennington.

Mr. Stephen Whipple from this town, chanced to be given in the disposal of men a place among the fighting ranks, and when in his position some impulsive enthusiastic man, eager for a shot at the enemy, approached him begging him to exchange he having been assigned the care of some horses in the rear. Mr. Whipple said he did not mind provided the captain consented. So the arrangement was made, and the poor fellow so eager for a fighting position went down in the fray, while Whipple lived to tell the story.

Lieut. Amos Prindle of Capt. Brown's company, stood side by side with Dea. Stephen Carpenter of New Providence, when the latter saw a man behind the Tory breast-works, raise his gun, take aim and fire at Prindle who fell dead at the feet of Carpenter. The next instant Carpenter had sent a shot crashing through the brain of the Tory and saw him fall; then the battle swept on, hiding the enemy from view. On going over the field next day Carpenter found, as he expected, the next door neighbor of Prindle, and an avowed Tory, stretched in death. His retribution had been swift and sure, and he must have met his victim again ere he left the battle-field.

Col. Stafford at the head of his band of volunteers was ordered to attack the Tory breast-works, which were in a southeasterly direction from the position of Col. Baum—a hill beyond the river—and distant something like a half mile. Approaching through a ravine which covered the little band from the fire of the enemy, they reached an advance guard of the Tories sooner than the colonel expected. He received a wound at this point, but it did not prevent him from retaining the command of his company, and leading them on where they soon found hotter fighting. Where the Tory breast-works reared their bulwarks highest, where the fight raged fiercest, and for two hours one unbroken peal of cannon, and shot of Tory musketry crashed and boomed, and pealed through the August day, there stood our brave Berkshire men, fighting together in one band—as one regiment. The Indians fled the field. The Tories were driven from their last breast-work, the Hessians forced to leave the ground, and the British troops to surrender. Col. Baum did, indeed, journey on the *big road* to meet his Great

Commander; but never would Gen. Burgoyne meet his officer at Albany on the Hudson, mid waving flags, and nodding plumes to the sound of triumphant music, for he fell mortally wounded on the hill at Bennington. They called the battle over, and said the day was won, when suddenly from over the winding Walloomsac—a tributary of the Hoosac—which was so shallow as to be forded at all points, and so crooked that it doubled three times as it meandered across the battle-ground, came the sound of marching feet, and past the mill, Col. Breyman's troops appeared with shining uniforms fresh from camp. Even Gen. Stark, looking around upon his men, weary and fagged, and worn, was confused, and scarcely knew what could be done.

Major Warner, who had himself been in consultation with Stark since the first alarm had not been able to put his men into action. Coming up from Manchester on the 15th, they had been exposed to the flooding rains, were drenched through and through, weighed down with the mud, their guns water clogged, and ammunition wet. Ere they could put themselves in a condition to cope with so powerful an enemy, the fighting was over.

At this critical moment they came to Stark's relief, who encouraged by their movements strove to rally his own men. Calling for volunteers to go out and meet the enemy, a young man called to a companion to take his place as guard over the horses or baggage, and stepped out before Stark as the first volunteer.

"But," said a cautious old soldier, who knew by bitter experiences of the past what that day's work might mean, "You are too young, my friend, for such a job."

"No," exclaimed Stark, "he is the first to offer I shall trust him."

One by one the ranks were filled. Standing near the end of the Berkshire line—by an old stone-wall—were two young men little more than boys and unknown to fame. These two had gone with the sturdy yeomanry when the signal gun had sounded on the tavern green, and answered at the roll-call of Capt. Brown, to the name of Daniel Coman and Nathan Wood. Watching Stark gathering his troops for the impending attack, seeing the peril of the hour, young Coman seemed to catch the inspiration, and leaping upon the wall he swung his hat high above his head and shouted, "Come on my boys, lets give one more pull and the day will be ours," and started forward to join the volunteers.

Meanwhile, Col. Breyman's command had halted near the grist-mill and about a mile from the first point of engagement. Warner's men and those who had rallied started down the road to meet the British. A slow march was made, and Breyman's men advanced strong and steady and sure. Well drilled and orderly, they met the Americans at a point about one mile

from the hill where Baum fought and fell, half a mile from the spot where they had started to meet them along the road to the west, and half a mile from the mill where Breyman's corps made the first halt, thus the Americans and British had marched each half a mile, but now the English soldiers pressed our men steadily back, and still back, until they stood upon the very ground where the first volunteer had come to the front, and where young Coman had made his sally from the stone-wall. Here they took their stand and stood like a rock, not one inch did they yield, and the cannons thundered again over the little rivers and among the mountains, and the dead colonel and the lieutenants lay on the hill overlooking the valley where they had died in the morning battle. And the brave young men with the old made the final pull all together, and it settled the day, for as the sun went down beyond the tall old mountains its last look was upon the "Red Coats," with their glistening bayonets in rapid retreat before the forces of Stark.

So ended the battle of Bennington. Gen. Stark in writing of it said: "The hardy yeomanry of New Hampshire, Massachusetts and Vermont, fresh from the plough and unused to the camp, advanced through fire and smoke and mounted breastworks that were well fortified and defended with cannon." Burgoyne writes to England in sad contrast to his orders to Baum: "This section unpeopled, almost unknown during the last war, swarms with the most rebellious people on the continent, and hangs like a gathering storm on my left. The obstinacy with which they fought surprised and astonished all beholders." Burgoyne never regained the cheerful heart nor the high hopes with which he started on this campaign, never again as when the flotilla sailed down Champlain, was he so positive that only triumph awaited the royal armies. After this his Indian supporters deserted him by scores, and a general consternation settled over his endeavors.

The General Court afterward re-imbursed the towns of Lanesborough, New Ashford, Williamstown, East Hoosuck, Windsor and New Providence settlement for the powder, lead and flint used at the battle and provided in the flurry of the moment by themselves.

The spoils taken by Stark were equally distributed among his soldiers, and his bravery was rewarded by a vote of thanks and the stars of Brigadier General. There is nothing in this queer world so successful as success. Stark acted independently—and succeeded. Had the battle by any fatality been lost the vote of censure actually passed by Congress after the battle, but before the news of its glorious success reached them, would have been forwarded with bitter disapproval in place of the promotion that followed. The present sent to Massachusetts from the Walloomscoieck hangs in the Senate Chamber at Boston: A Hessian gun and bayonet, a drum, sword,

and a grenadier's cap with its tuft of feathers. The sword of Col. Baum is still in the possession of G. W. Robinson of Bennington, and owned by E. D. Foster of Cheshire, is a walking stick made of a beech twig pulled on the battle-field in 1777.

Seven hundred prisoners, four field pieces, four ammunition wagons, and a thousand stand of arms were the trophies of Stark and his brave men at Bennington.

Among those who went from Lanesborough, (now Cheshire), was Capt. Daniel Brown. At his home, on that still afternoon in autumn, came the sound of an occasional cannon shot. By the cradle of a sick child sat the wife of the soldier, the village doctor had told her there was but little hope of recovery, and as every echo from the battle, sixteen miles away, reached her ears, she kissed the cold brow of the infant, and shivered lest her husband too, might be lying cold in death.

"Send for the captain," said an attendant who was witness to her silent grief.

"Oh, no," replied the brave woman, "I would not call him from his place of duty. He would not come if I did," and she turned to watch by the cradle of the little sufferer.

The prisoners taken at Bennington were marched through Berkshire County and a detachment of them passed through Lanesborough, (now known as Cheshire). Among these was a band of Hessians who could speak no English—as a rule—and had been told when hired to England's King to help fight his war in the colonies, that if they were ever taken prisoners they would be massacred in cold blood by the Americans who were by nature a cruel and bloodthirsty people, therefore, they must fight like bloodhounds before they suffered themselves to be taken prisoners. So now they recalled this story and believed that a dreadful death awaited them in the near future. Marching with downcast faces and heavy hearts, they reached the farm on the old road down the valley owned now by Mrs. Reed, when one of the Hessians who had learned a smattering of the English tongue, on entering into conversation with a guard found that they were not to be murdered, only paroled and prevented from fighting. The news ran like lightning along the line, overjoyed with the assurance they struck up a wild Hessian song of triumph. The music rolled along the valley, gathered strength with every added bar, travelled on and on, echoed from the hills, and swelling in one grand finale died away in notes of joy on the distance.

From Stone's Campaign of Burgoyne, a book somewhat rare, the following letters are taken, which will doubtless interest all dwellers of Cheshire who are interested in its early history. The first is a letter containing a

communication from the lips of Col. Joab Stafford's son, Richard, made in 1828, and runs as follows :

"My father lived in the western part of Massachusetts, and when Col. Warner called upon the militia to come out and defend the public stores at Bennington, he set off at once with many of his neighbors and hurried his march. He was well known to his townsmen, and so much esteemed that the best men were ready to go with him, many of them pious people, long members of the church, and among them young and old, and of different conditions. When they reached the ground they found the Hessians posted in a line, and on a spot of high ground a small redoubt was seen formed of earth just thrown up where they understood a body of Loyalists or Provincial troops, that is Tories, was stationed. Col. Warner had command under Gen. Stark, and it is generally thought that he had more to do than his superior in the business of the day. He was held in high regard by the Massachusetts people, and my father reported himself to him, and told him that he awaited his orders. He was soon assigned a place in the line, and the Tory fort was pointed out as his particular object of attack.

"When making arrangements to march out his men, my father turned to a tall, athletic man, one of the most vigorous of the band, and remarkable for size and strength among his neighbors. 'I am glad,' said he, 'to see you among us. You did not march with the company; but, I suppose, you are anxious for the day to begin.' This was said in the hearing of the rest, and attracted their attention. My father was surprised and mortified on observing the man's face turn pale and his limbs tremble. With a faltering voice he replied: 'Oh, no, sir, I didn't come to fight, I only came to drive back the horses!' 'I am glad,' said my father, 'to find out we have a coward among us before we go into battle. Stand back, and do not show yourself here any longer.'

"This occurrence gave my father much regret, and he repented having spoken to the man in the presence of his company. The country, you know, was at that time in a very critical state. Gen. Burgoyne had come down from Canada with an army which had driven all the American troops before it. Crown Point and Ticonderoga, the fortresses of Lake Champlain, in which the northern people placed such confidence had been deserted at his approach, and the army disgraced itself by a panic retreat without fighting a battle, while Burgoyne was publishing boastful and threatening proclamations which frightened many, and induced some to declare for the King. Just at such a time when so many bad examples were set, and there were so many dangers to drive others to follow, it was a sad thing to see a hale, hearty, tall man shake and tremble in the presence of the enemy as we were just going to fight them. However, an occurrence happened, fortunately, to take place immediately after which made amends. There was an aged and excellent old man present, of a slender frame, stooping a little with advanced age and hard work, with a wrinkled face and well known as one of the oldest person in our town, and the oldest on the ground. My father was struck with regard for his aged frame, and much as he felt numbers to be desirable in the impending struggle he felt a great reluctance at the thought of leading him into it. He therefore turned to him and said: 'The labors of the day threaten to be severe, it is therefore my particular request that you will take your post as sentinel yonder, and keep charge of the baggage.' The old man stepped forward with an unexpected spring, his face was lighted with a smile, and pulling off his hat in the excitement of his spirit, half affecting the gayety of a youth, whilst his loose hair shone as white as silver, he briskly replied: 'Not till I've had a shot at them first, Captain, if you please.' All thoughts were now directed toward the ene-

mies line, and the company partaking in the enthusiasm of the old man gave three cheers. My father was set at ease again in a moment, and orders being soon brought to advance he placed himself at their head, and gave the word, 'Forward, march!'

"He had observed some irregularity in the ground before them which he had thought might favor his approach, and he discovered that a small ravine, which they soon entered, would cover his determined little band from the shot of the enemy, and even from their observations, at least for some distance. He pursued its course, but was so far disappointed in his expectations that, instead of terminating at a distance from the enemy's line, on emerging from it, and looking about to see where he was, he found the fresh embankment of the Tory fort just above him, and the heads of the Tories peeping over with their guns levelled at him. Turning to call on his men he was surprised to find himself flat on the ground without knowing why, for the enemy had fired and a ball had gone through his foot into the ground, cutting some of the sinews just as he was stepping on it so as to bring him down. At the same time the shock had deafened him to the report of the muskets. The foremost of the soldiers ran up to take him in their arms, believing him to be dead or mortally wounded, but he was too quick for them, and sprang on his feet, glad to find he was not seriously hurt, and was able to stand. He feared that his fall might check his followers, and as he caught the glimpse of a man in a red coat running across a distant field, he cried out, 'Come on, my boys! they run! they run!' So saying, he sprang up, and clambering to the top of the fort, while the enemy were hurrying their powder into the pans and the muzzles of their pieces, his men rushed on shouting and firing and jumping over the breastworks, and pushing upon the defenders so closely that they threw themselves over the opposite wall, and ran down the hill as fast as their legs could carry them.

"It so happened that many years after the close of the war, and when I heard my father tell this story many times over, I became acquainted with an old townsman of his who was a Loyalist, and took an active part as a soldier in the service of King George, and he told me the following story of the battle of Bennington:

"I lived not far from the western border of Massachusetts when the war began, and knew your father very well. Believing that I owed duty to my King I became known as a Loyalist, or, as they called me, a Tory, and my position became very unpleasant. I therefore left home, and got with the British troops who were come down with Burgoyne to restore the country to peace, as I thought.

"When the Hessians were sent to take the stores at Bennington I went with them, and took my station with some of the other Loyalists in a redoubt or small fort in the line. We were all ready when we saw the Rebels coming to attack us, and were on such a hill, and behind such a bank that we felt perfectly safe, and thought we could kill any body of troops sent against us before they could reach the place upon which we stood. We had not expected, however, that they would approach us under cover, but supposed we should see them on the way. We did not know that a little gully which lay below us was long enough and deep enough to conceal them; but they knew the ground, and the first we saw of the party coming to attack us they made their appearance right under our guns. Your father was at the head of them. I was standing at the wall with my gun loaded in my hand, and several of us levelled our pieces at once. I took as fair aim at them as ever I did at a bird in my life, and thought I was sure of them although we had to point so much downward that it made a man a small mark. Your father and I fired together, and he fell I thought he was dead to a certainty, but to our surprise he was on his feet again in an instant, and



they all came jumping in upon us with such a noise that we thought of nothing but getting out of the way of their muskets as fast as possible, and we scattered in all directions. I had a sister living in that vicinity with whom I sought refuge."

When Col. Stafford was carried from the battle-field of Bennington on a litter, up the slope of Stafford's Hill to his own home, where he kept at that time a tavern and store combined: in his bar-room they found Cummins, the Tory, whom the colonel reprimanded on the morning of the sixteenth. As he had arranged to do he drove the horses home, and on this day dropped in at the tavern. He had rendered himself obnoxious to his patriotic neighbors prior to this, and now to find him comfortably quartered there, while their brave friend and commander was suffering from a wound inflicted by just such Tories as he was rendered them wild with indignation, and they would have hung him without judge or jury as soon as they could have prepared and adjusted a rope had it not been for the interference of Col. Joab, who took the ground that his house was the refuge of all in distress, and he would not suffer it.

By thus saving the life of Cummins he secured warm friends for his family, and descendants as well as for himself, for the man was so overwhelmed by such an unexpected act of friendship or kindness, that he never could forget it, but remained an ardent friend of the noble colonel, and bequeathed the feeling as a legacy to his children. Living in the same town with Col. Stafford was an old white-haired man—probably the oldest man in New Providence settlement at the time of Bennington Battle—by the name of Henry Tibbits. He heard the news of the invasion that threatened the frontier, and was told that the signal gun was to be fired on the tavern green when men were needed. He took down his musket, he cleaned and polished it, he carefully loaded it, then he filled his powder-flask, and took his shot, arranging it as hunters do, and placing it in some secure hiding place he told his wife that he must needs chop his trees, but if the gun should sound from the tavern door she should take the musket from off the hook, and bring it to him in the woods.

Busy at her work she did not fail to listen, and through the open windows came at last the booming of the gun to notify the minute men, and according to the plan the brave woman took the musket and went out to meet her husband. He waited for no formalities, his leather apron girdled his waist, and he took no time to remove it. Receiving the weapon from the hands that bore it with a hurried good-bye he was off for Bennington, and was the white-haired man who so earnestly desired "one shot at 'em," before he accepted the place proposed as overseer of the horses and baggage. Henry Tibbits was related by marriage to Col. Stafford.

Occupying a prominent position, always generous, Col. Joab Stafford was

often called upon by his country to assist in her times of need. To these calls he turned no deaf ear. He already was called captain when he came up from Rhode Island in 1767, whether from actual service as commander of some training band, or as master of a ship is not known.

The first Stafford coming to America was Thomas Stafford. He brought with him the coat-of-arms of the English family engraved on wood and mounted on a panel a foot square it bore the words: "Virtue the Corner Stone of Life."

Samuel, the son of Thomas married Mercy, daughter of Stukely Wescott. This Stukely Wescott and wife were banished from the Salem colony with Roger Williams and followed him to Providence. Here it was that Samuel Stafford met and married Mercy Wescott. From this Stukely Wescott descended Benedict Arnold. Thomas, son of Samuel and Mercy Stafford, married Audrey Green, and was the father of Col. Joab Stafford, who married Susannah Spencer, a pretty quakeress, and became the father of ten children.

Thomas Stafford died in 1765, and in 1767 Joab joined his friends and neighbors in seeking a home in Berkshire. He bought of Joseph Bennet and Nicholas Cook three lots of land on the hill which has always borne his name. He came from the revolutionary struggle as colonel, and when the war was actually over he found himself rich in an exploded currency, but poor in reality for little was left, save his real estate, of a property by no means small as he had been successful in early life as a lumber merchant, and as a voyager to foreign countries from whence he brought many curious and rare articles that are treasured by his descendents as precious heir looms. Col. Joab handed down the *coat-of-arms* of the family, and it is now in possession of Mrs. Edward Doolittle of Bergen, N. J. Among the pioneers who entered Berkshire during the years following 1767, was a Stukely Wescott, who owned land, and whose descendents have dwelled always in this vicinity.

The Stukely Wescott banished with Williams, being grandfather of Col. Joab Stafford, the families were, no doubt, neighbors and friends intimately known in addition to the relationship, and, as such, joined the exodus coming up at a little later date than Joab himself. Stukely settled near his neighbor Stafford, and there are deeds and deeds—on the records—of farms deeded to his various sons by Stukely Senior.

Col. Joab was declared a revolutionary pensioner in 1794, and applied to Congress for back pay between the dates of 1794 and 1777, this request was denied. Col. Stafford then sold two of his farms on the hill, and removed to Albany, N. Y., where his name appears repeatedly in connection with the commissioner of Land Patents. In 1800, he returned to Cheshire to

the house of his son Richard, who lived at "The Notch," just below the hill. The wife of his youth died at Albany just before this, and the brave pioneer and patriot feeling his health impaired, overcome by disease, perhaps, felt in his loneliness a longing for the home and scenes he appears to have loved. At all events he never again left them. In 1800, he parted with the last farm, the spot on the very top of the hill where he had kept the tavern and store. This is the farm now occupied by Mr. Frank Prince, and is only a stone's throw from the site of the meeting house built in 1786. Joab Stafford also owned a house on the opposite side of the street, this he sold to Timothy Mason, who kept open house there for many years, and in 1801, when the November leaves were falling, they bore the brave pioneer and gallant soldier over the fields to the Notch burying ground where "they left him alone in his glory," with the simple stone to tell through all the years the story of his death.

Richard Stafford left Cheshire in 1815, for Palatine Bridge, N. Y., where he died in 1826. His wife was Susan Brown, daughter of Elisha Brown of Cheshire. His descendents still reside in Canajoharie and vicinity.

Col. Brown of Berkshire, was stationed in the fall of 1780 at Fort Paris on the hills north of the Mohawk River, and ordered to assist Gen. Van Rensselaer in heading off Johnson and his Tory band.

No section of the country was more bitter against the colonial cause than the magnificent valley of the Mohawk, swept through and through by Johnson's hordes, scoured by sullen bands of Indians, traitors lurked at every corner and menaced the Patriots at every turn. That Col. Brown in the prime of his noble strength, foreseeing and vigilant as he was—reading with unerring certainty the characters of those about him—with the fate of Braddock, and the more recent tragedy of the gallant Herkimer at Oriskany before him as warnings, should listen to the beguiling words of the foe without one questioning word must ever remain a mystery—a mystery made doubly strange from the fact that a faithful soldier had entered his tent that morning and warned him of danger at hand; but the brave general refused to listen to what seemed idle forebodings, and on the morning of the 19th of October started with his troops to effect the junction with Van Rensselaer. These troops numbered about 300, and were largely New England levies with a goodly number from Lanesborough and New Providence. On this same morning Sir John Johnson crossed the Mohawk at a rift near the spot where now stands the village of Spraker's Basin. The march of his Tories, Indians and Loyalists along the Susquehanna and Schoharie Creek to the Mohawk had been a desolating one, he had camped at the Nose the previous night, and marched directly on toward Fort Paris the morning of the 19th.

Gen. Van Rensselaer encamped at Fultonville on the night of the 18th, only fourteen miles east of the enemy, and he might easily have overtaken them, and with his vastly superior force might, it would seem, have averted the fall of Col. Brown, but while we know that he succeeded in reaching Fort Plain, only three miles from the battle-field, while the noise of the carnage, and the Indian war-whoop were still sounding through the valley from the Palatine Hills and dined with a friend, we must remember that at the court of inquiry held at Albany to ascertain the cause of his slow march he was exonerated from all blame.

Col. Brown prompt to obey his commanding officer started from Fort Paris at an early hour. It was his thirty-sixth birthday that was to be the day of his death. Clad in his official uniform, mounted on his black charger he rode leisurely over the breezy knolls, through the hollows in the dense thickets of the new country, along the road expressly marked out by Gen. Van Rensselaer. At his side in unbroken silence rode the friend whose dream had foretold hidden danger or ambushade.

Marching down toward the Mohawk, they soon passed the little stockade of Fort Keyser, and looking for the enemy expecting Van Rensselaer to be in their rear he hastened on when he came suddenly around a turn in the road. Just before him and where the highway branched off, on a commanding knoll stood a farm-house, its old-fashioned front rose straight for two stories, upon it rested its antique roof with deep dormer windows, over it great trees tossed their glossy boughs, before it swept a fresh open meadow, and to the westward the placid Cayuga Creek wound its way to the Mohawk scarcely two miles away. Beneath a gnarled hickory tree, before this house was gathered what seemed a family party. Grand parents and children, fathers, mothers and servants, in their midst a mounted horseman speaking his last good-bye to a weeping woman. The horseman galloped forward, and delivered to Col. Brown the following message: "Gen. Van Rensselaer bade me tarry until you came up to tell you to bring your troops by this road rather than the one you are pursuing." Death walked by that way-side but no one saw him, only the faithful soldier who had warned his colonel, yet again that morning, felt his blighting shadow, but with no other word he rode with his officer and friend into the fatal ambush from which neither would ever emerge in life. So palpable seems the plot it appears that the voice of the horseman could hardly fail to tremble in pronouncing the lie, lest the usually far-seeing Colonel should detect the ruse. He who said of Benedict Arnold, years before he acted the role of traitor, "So great is his greed for gold, so black his heart, I fear if the British meet and know him he would sell his country," read no guile in the traitor who addressed him that October morning. Surely, "Whom the Gods destroy

they first make mad." The gallant colonel turned down the road followed by his men and in silence rode into "The valley of Death."

A little later the Indian whoop, the whizzing arrow, and rattle of musket shot told the story of a deadly ambushade. Bewildered, unprepared, there was nothing left but flight or death with, alas! no choice for some. Col. Brown and his friend fell at the first fire.\* Nehemiah Richardson, of Cheshire, tall, muscular and fleet, used his limbs to the best advantage, and escaped unharmed, so did Amos Pettibone. Tradition says that Moses Wolcott fared hard in the scramble for life because of his slight stature, and would have hardly come out of the melee only that the bright idea occurred to him of pressing the fleet legs of Nehemiah Richardson into his service. He caught his coat-tails as he dashed past him in hot haste and clung to them with all the tenacity that the "Old man of the Sea," did to Sinbad the Sailor.

Nehemiah objected at first, and as the burden grew heavy and troublesome protested against the arrangement, when Uncle Moses would exclaim as he gathered the skirts in a tighter clutch.

"I snore! I snore! Nehemiah, that's wrong, now, to throw a neighbor off. Don't you do it. Don't you jump me."

Perhaps it would have taken longer to cast him off than to go on with him, and perhaps the kind heart of the tall man would not allow such a move. It was remarked once by an old man whose peculiar temperament did not allow him to progress pleasantly with all of his neighbors and who did not acquiesce in the religious opinions of the Richardsons:

"Well, there's no use in arguing—they Richardsons were born Christians from the beginning, and that ends it." At all events, whatever prompted Mr. Richardson he allowed the little man to ride out on his coat skirts and they reached a place of safety together. It is said that Amos Pettibone never wearied of recounting this wonderful story.

Like the tale of "Horatius at the Bridge," ever repeated by the Roman firesides when the nights were long, when the good wife knit her stockings, and the good man mended the bow, so with this more modern battle in the little brown farm house by the open kitchen fire of piled up maple logs, this story of the "Brave days of old," and Little Moses' strange ride at *Stoney Araby* was told again and again until the teller won for himself the soubriquet of *Stoney Araby*.

It is comparatively easy to record those who came home from this dreadful battle-field, and quite impossible to find which of the Berkshire boys fell in death. It is known, however, that there were some, and in the lan-

\*Col. Brown had with him that morning 250 or 300 men, 45 were slain and scalped, the rest took refuge in flight. Six were slain by the Indians when found behind a rock, where they had hidden.

guage of one of Berkshire's orators, "John Brown sleeps not alone at Stone Arabia. Many a Berkshire boy fell with him. Many a Berkshire mother's heart sunk within her at the news of that day's work."

On the 30th day of June, 1777, Captain Samuel Low's company marched to the St. Croix where they remained in service until the 14th day of August, when they were dismissed just in time to be summoned from that place to Bennington, where they fought, and were in service from the 14th to the 19th of the same month (August).

On the 5th day of September came the alarm all down the county from Pawlet, the head-quarters of Gen. Lincoln. Troops were needed to defend the frontier from Burgoyne and his horde of Tories and lawless savages, a merciless foe to send out in civilized warfare; but one which the minister at the Court of St. James declared to be a proper one to fight the colonists of England, "On principle."

Again Capt. Low's troops started for the front, and remained from the 5th of September until the 5th of October. Twice during the month of October, 1780, Capt. Low's company were called to the northward under orders of Gen. Fellows.

On the 16th of July, 1777, a company of volunteers under Capt. Joab Stafford marched from New Providence to re-enforce Col. Warner's men at Manchester, by order of Gen. Schnyler.

On September 5th, 1777, Capt. Daniel Brown marched with his company to Pawlet, the head-quarters of Gen. Lincoln. Many brilliant exploits were performed by the Berkshire detachments during the month included from September 5th to October 5th.

On October 13th, 20th and 27th, 1780, Capt. Daniel Brown and his company were called for and marched to the relief.

On July 13th, 1779, Capt. Brown's company commanded by Lieut. White were sent to New Haven.

The men of Cheshire who went out in this command were Silas Barker, Jeremiah Read, Joshua Read and Newhall Barker. In a company under Lieut. Jeremiah Brown, in Col. Asa Barnes' regiment, which was detached on an alarm on the 13th day of October, 1781, and joined Gen. Stark at Saratoga, were Rufus Carpenter, Levi Wilmarth, Joseph Spenceer, Jonathan Smith, Benjamin Bowen, Jonathan Richardson, Daniel Biddlecome, John Wilmarth, Jeremiah Smith, Joab Stafford, Jr., and John Richardson who were detailed to take care of the baggage and paid twelve shillings.

On the 19th of October was the fatal battle of Stone Arabia, in which were engaged, from New Providence and Lanesborough, Nehemiah Richardson, Calvin Hall, Daniel Reid, Benjamin Carpenter, Charles Thrasher, Amos Pettybone, Moses Wolcott, Simeon Smith, and Roger Pettybone. Tradition

says that Lieut. Nathaniel Bliss was also in this engagement. His name does not appear on the pay rolls.

In 1844 of this decade Deacon Daniel Coman put up the house where Mr. James Wells now resides, he having purchased the farm of 250 acres from the heirs of Deacon Coman in 1844. The deacon is described by a contemporary as a wealthy farmer devoted to his church, first in all good works and deeds of charity. A large family filled the house which stands upon the original site and is but little changed. It is among the oldest houses in the town; for this is its centennial year. The farm is beautifully located, and is approached by a grassy lane lined with trees on either side, and gorgeous in the October days with the wealth of blooming golden rod and crimson sumac leaves. The fields and meadows sweep away from the house like some vast amphitheatre, at the foot of a little incline and in easy view from the house is the fish pond, a sparkling sheet of blue water, which glints in the sunshine as it did a hundred years ago, when the deacon walked upon its brink, and the children paddled across it in the boat always floating there. It is never dry, is twenty feet deep, and is fed from invisible springs with no apparent outlet.

The house upon this farm is an ancient landmark that has been protected with the most generous care by its present owner, Mr. Wells. The flat door stone of half circular shape is mortised into the massive cellar wall, and appears none the worse for all the feet that have crossed it. Entering the door one is plunged headlong into an antiquarian mine, which the owner patiently goes over with the descendants of the Coman family, whose name is legion. The parlor with its fire place and little handirons, its tiny window panes, the old wainscoting with its dark blue paint, the very cat holes in the doors, the wooden hinges, and quaint latches where the latch string was always out, with some of the chairs, the tables and stands, reach back to the days when the Comans lived beneath the roof and laid their plans for work and pleasure. Across that corner in the little parlor stood the happy bride, beneath that window they placed the burial case, and in yonder bedroom Deacon Coman, like a shock of corn fully ripe, bade good-bye to life. In the chamber above are coats of home-made broadcloth, bell crowned hats and bonnets, grown old like the faces that wore them, which bring your ancestors around you clad as of old in their high heeled shoes, and short gowns and petticoats.

Going up the lane, on the right hand side, lies the family burying ground. The Comans, Whipples and Angels of those days rest there beneath the sod, a goodly company, the gray haired man and the little babe, the soldier scarcely at the prime of life, and the young maiden. Over them all nod the trees set out by hands long since dust. The Coman family went out from

this homestead one by one, to form homes for themselves, seeking as their fathers had done before them, a new country. Mercy Coman married Arnold Mason, son of one of the early settlers on Pork Lane, and started at once for Central New York, crossing the Hudson at Albany on the ice, traveling with an ox team. They made their home where the spires and chimneys of Utica now rise, which with the means for traveling they had at their command was a great distance from the farm house in the Berkshire settlement; the way was difficult at the best for the journey must be made with oxen or on horseback, it was only the favored few who had private carriages, and public conveyances were not provided. But when sickness entered the home, and a sister lay at the point of death, distance and danger were forgotten, and Mrs. Mason mounted her pony, took her youngest child, a babe of little more than three months, and so, on horseback, rode the entire distance from Utica to Lanesborough, reaching her destination in safety, while neither herself nor child was the worse for the brave undertaking.

The same year that Deacon Coman came to Cheshire, Stephen Whipple bought land at what is always called Muddy Brook from the brownish yellow color that the stream takes on at that point. The farm that he bought proved to be a valuable investment for Mr. Whipple, although not an altogether satisfactory sale to the owner, Dr. Lyon. Mr. Whipple, it appears, either took the papers, or, with native shrewdness that taught him to go through the world with his eyes well open, learned that the money of the States, Continental currency as they called it, and which had been as good as gold, was rapidly depreciating, and he must make use of what he had soon, or it would be a dead letter on his hands. So, taking his way up to Lanesborough, he made an offer for this Muddy Brook farm which was accepted and for which he paid the cash. Ere many months elapsed the money became so utterly useless, that from that time to the present, the most emphatic way to express the entire nothingness of any article has been to say, "Its not worth a continental," and Mr. Whipple's predecessor found that the money he had so gladly received was nothing but dust, that like the Dead Sea fruit had turned to ashes in his hands.

It was the ancestor of these Whipples who spilled the first blood of the Revolutionary war. Capt. Whipple of the schooner, *Defense*, in Charleston harbor was ordered to use all military precaution to oppose the passage of the British toward Fort Johnson. He executed the order, and as it was before the Declaration of Independence, it opened the war at the south. There have been three Baptist ministers in the family, Rev. Madison Whipple, Roswell Whipple and Rev. Alden B. Whipple of Pittsfield, a historian of several of the Berkshire towns.

Deacon Stephen Carpenter, an early comer, was at this time a man of note



and influence, successful in a worldly way, his family are said to have been among the most aristocratic people. He settled north of the village in New Providence, and his home was built just below the point where Pork Lane merges into the old road to Adams. This street, so much traveled then, is now a grassy, country lane, the houses are old, some of them have tumbled down, the stone walls are overgrown with bushes and mountain flowers, still some good farms and farmers are found there at the present time. Mr. George Carpenter, a great grandson of the deacon lives in one of them.

Pork Lane received its name because from days immemorial the people have inclined to pork and beans, which the housewives all up and down its borders are said to excel in preparing. In 1782 Stephen Ingalls came to Cheshire with his parents. He grew up here and his name is often seen. He raised a large family on a farm at the west of Cheshire, and his sons and daughters have been among the substantial families of the town. Some of his sons are living on fine farms, some interested in manufacturing, others in buying and selling dairies. Capt. Darius Bucklin was a man of note in town. The Lincolns, too, settled at New Providence, early, and lived upon the farm and in the house which was the stopping place for stages when first put upon the road. David Dunnell of Stafford's Hill was a soldier that the town may well be proud of. He joined the regular army, served through the entire revolutionary war, and received his discharge in 1783 signed by Washington's own hand.

With the return of peace in 1783, the outlook was a sorry one for the men of New England. All private affairs had been sadly neglected throughout the colonial conflict, all business was disarranged, buildings had fallen into decay, and the farms into neglect, debts had been contracted, interest piled upon interest, towns were involved by the large quota of men provided, and for whose maintenance they were held responsible, crops had failed and famine stalked in at their doors, add to all these the consolidated debt of the State, and it is not difficult to see that millions of dollars stared them in the face, with no sale for their produce, and a rapidly depreciating paper currency.

The Berkshire men were honest and sturdy; but how were they to pay these debts, and at the same time keep absolute starvation from their wives and babes? Impossibilities *cannot* be accomplished, and when the laws admitted of the seizing of their crops and cattle for the payment of these debts, groups of men gathered, "under the rose," refused to pay their taxes, and threatened to overthrow the government which, but a little while ago they were willing to lay down their lives for. Unduly influenced by false leaders what wonder that they should in a moment of desperation fail to see the folly and mischief involved in the insurrection of Daniel Shays?

It is true, that a few men from these settlements joined the disaffected, and followed their fortunes until after considerable skirmishing and some fighting, the insurgents were disbanded. Some of the leading spirits were held for punishment, and a few condemned to death, although afterward pardoned. However, those engaged were filled with terror, and feared the worst in case they should be arrested. Hearing that officers were in town searching for the rebels some of the guilty men hastened to a house on Pork Lane where lived a resolute, cool-headed man, who was a sympathizer with the insurrectionists. Considering the attempt to escape from town too hazardous, the old man, Jessie Mason, conducted them to the kitchen, and removing some bricks from an oven that had passed into disuse concealed the Tories there until the search and excitement was over. This house is now occupied by Mr. Leroy Northrop.

Two others fled to the Hoosac mountains hoping in the fastnesses to find shelter and security. There was a driving autumnal storm that night, the wind was piercing, and the wanderers suffered from the severe cold. Approaching a hut that had been used by mountain choppers they entered, built a fire on the hearth, propped up the door to keep out the wind and snow, they lay down upon the floor before the fire, and weary with their long tramp soon fell into a deep sleep. The fire burned low, some charcoal had been used in its construction, and the fumes of the dying flames in the tight apartment generated a poison that filled the air, and days after the poor fellows were found suffocated.

During the year 1779, the New Providence people were anxious to annex themselves to the town of Adams. Several meetings were called, and the subject considered. There appears to have been decided "pros" and quite as many "cons," for there were meetings and meetings where lively, spirited debates were held; but they all ended in discussion, and the folks went home. The fact of the union seemed to be substantiated because the dwellers on Stafford's Hill dated their letters at Adams, all deeds after this time were made out at Adams, and the church on New Providence Hill was referred to as the First Baptist church of Adams, beside the significant fact that all votes were cast at that village. After much eager search, at last, through the appreciative interest and care of Mr. Joseph Northrop, Town Clerk of Cheshire, an old paper, yellowed by time, and creased with manifold foldings, was unearthed which proved to be the veritable document, the legal instrument by which Stafford's Hill was added to the town of Adams. Lest this paper may go a straying during the coming hundred years, and journey too far to be reclaimed by the searcher after antiquarian lore at that period a verbatim copy is given below:

"Be it therefore enacted by the Council, and House of Representatives in General

Court assembled and by the authority of the same, that the plantation called New Providence, in the county of Berkshire, together with the inhabitants thereon be, and hereby is annexed to, and incorporated with the town of Adams, and that said plantation with the inhabitants thereon shall be considered as belonging to said town of Adams provided nevertheless that the said inhabitants shall pay their proportionable part of all taxes which are already assessed, and levied on said plantation as heretofore; anything in this act notwithstanding; and be it further enacted by the authority aforesaid that the account of the estate contained in said plantation, and the polls thereon returned by the assessors of said plantation in the valuation list taken be set to the town of Adams."

This act passed April 10th, 1780.

In 1786, the New Providence people built a new meeting house on the top of Stafford's Hill, because the busy village was located there. On either side of the long street were houses and stores and it seemed appropriate that the meeting house should be in their midst. The old building down the northern slope, hard by the present burying ground, was then converted into a dwelling house and moved to the glebe farm where it still stands in good repair and condition.

John Wells, who came up from Rhode Island with his wife and baby, and all of his earthly possessions on the old gray mare, took up, first, the land now known as the Bennet farm. They hired a man and horse to help break the land and clear the trees, the days were very busy ones, and when evening came, Mr. Wells sat down and made a pair of shoes, and his wife sat by his side and made a pair of pants. The price commanded for the shoes and the pants paid for the use of the horse and the man through the day.

In 1780, Joseph Bennet who had taken up the land now belonging to the Wells' farm, traded with Uncle John who moved on to it; which farm has always been the home of the Wells family since 1780. The present house was erected about 1768, and is one of the most ancient houses of the town, but has always been kept in such perfect repair that one scarcely notes the record of time. It still stands one's ideal of an old New England farm house with its low walls, its long front entered by three doors, its dormer windows from which one has a charming view of the winding Hoosac, the distant village, the large reservoir shimmering in the sunshine, while in the far distance the mountains of Southern Berkshire loom up in dreamy indistinctness. The fifth generation is living in it now, and in every one has been a John Wells. The present Mrs. John Wells is a granddaughter of Henry Tibbits of Bennington fame. The first land cleared by him was on Mount Amos, and it was there he was felling trees on the 14th of August when his wife went out to carry him the musket. Nathan and Daniel Wood are two more pioneers who came at an early date. They were brothers and settled at Lanesborough. The land and homes upon which they settled

have been bequeathed from generation to generation to their descendants. Both Nathan and Daniel were at Bennington. Mrs. Daniel Wood took the farm work from the hands of her husband, finished the unploughed furrow, tended to the crops, milked the cows, and made the cheese. New houses have been put up on these farms.

The Medad King Inn, and the gambrel roofed house under the elms were built the same year as the Wells' homestead, 1768. The wife of William Jacques came from Windsor at an early day. She lived upon a small farm on the slope of Stafford's Hill, just before reaching the David Bowen place. There she kept a store and reared her children. William Jacques, a son, lived upon the hill all of his life. His son, Herbert Jacques, resides upon the Bowen farm, a portion of which he owns, it having been divided in its sale. This family boasts a Coat of Arms, which makes four in town thus distinguished. They are descendants of John Hancock.

John Chase was a pioneer who settled on Pork Lane. He belonged to an old English family and his descendants have been notified that a large fortune is lying still for them in London. Some members of the American Chase family, gifted with legal lore, have given attention to the matter, and become convinced that there is money there, however, they fear that more money will require to be raised on this side the Atlantic, than is locked up for them on the other, before they could secure any legal movement.

## CHAPTER III.

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### FROM 1787—1797.

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ABOLISHED CUSTOMS. MOSES WOLCOTT'S TAVERN. DISSENSION FROM THE SIX PRINCIPLE CHURCH. ELDER LELAND. BRICK SCHOOL HOUSE BUILT. INCORPORATION OF THE TOWN OF CHESHIRE. FIRST TOWN OFFICERS. BUILDING OF CHURCH. LAYING OUT A BURIAL GROUND. JESSE JENKS. EDWARD MARTIN. DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRIES. ANECDOTES OF CAPT. BROWN AND FAMILY. DR. JENKS. DR. CUSHING. INNOCULATION FOR SMALL POX. HOLDING OF SLAVES. THE DARK DAY. THE BLISS AND SOUTHWARD FARMS.

The war of the revolution well over, and the colonists established on a ground of an assured freedom, they renounced many manners and customs that they had brought with them from the mother country, and which were odious to them simply because they were used by a royal government.

One of the laws entered upon the statute books during this decade was: "All drivers required to turn to the right as the law directs." In opposition to the left, as the English law demanded. The custom of wearing mourning for the dead was for the time laid aside, and that of presenting gloves, a scarf, or ring, to servants and bearers that had been handed down from generation to generation, and kept intact in the colonies, was now discarded never again to be revived. Because of their bitterness toward anything tending to a one man power, democratic ideas gained a strong root. Taxes were high, it is true, but their own representatives levied them, and the people soon ceased to murmur, while under the guidance of a strong administration they were fairly launched upon that wave of prosperity which could not be foretold, and is still at high tide.

In 1790, Moses Wolcott, or "Little Moses," as he was familiarly known on account of his extreme smallness of stature, was keeping store in the house afterwards owned by Sally Heath. In 1795, he built the house at the head of the long main street in Cheshire, now occupied by Mr. F. F. Petittlere, and opened it as an inn. A tall sign post, forty feet high, announced to travelers that here were furnished refreshments for man and beast. The width of a driveway from the stone door-steps, a row of ancient, Lombardy poplars stood. Within was a broad hall running directly through the house. On the south side was the best room with a dining-

room at the rear. On the north was the bar room and beyond that, the kitchen. In all four rooms were immense fire places. In one half of the upper floor the partitions were so arranged that they could be swung up and hooked to the ceiling, thus displaying a large hall for dancing. A wing extending to the north of the house was used by Mr. Wolcott as a store, and from the stone door steps a long platform stretched along the entire length of inn and store. A brass door knocker, highly polished, shone as the rays of the sun danced through the branches of the poplar trees upon it, and the queer little diamond paned windows overlooked the drive way. In the yard at the side, country door-yard plants nodded against the windows, and in the garden beyond, were patches of fennel and caraway and a grassy rim where currant bushes stood like a hedge. A regular, old fashioned, characteristic inn of New England, wearing an air of precise respectability which clung to it way down to old age. Equally characteristic was the low store where all kinds of barter was carried on, cash, butter, cheese, and eggs taken in trade.

"Good morning, Mr. Wolcott," said a wag approaching the counter, having a pail over which was tied a snowy cloth as though it was heavily loaded. "What's butter worth to-day," supposing the man had butter to sell Mr. Wolcott replied, naming a price two cents below his selling mark. "Well I don't care if I take twenty pounds," said the wag, as he demurely handed over the pail to be filled. Fairly beaten for once, the merchant filled the order, but he no doubt remembered that customer. Here Mr. Wolcott amassed a large fortune in lands and money. He married early in life, Olive Russell who died young, leaving one daughter Laura. Freeloze Burton was the second wife of Moses Wolcott who through the long years of their life together was a most excellent helpmeet. She made cheese and butter, managed the kitchen and home affairs, sold goods at the counter of the little store, and mixed flip at the bar for the many customers. All produce, of which cheese was the staple, was carried by teamsters to "The River" at Troy or some other point where it was sent by sloop to market in New York City, and this inn was a convenient halting place for the drivers to water their horses, and step into the cosy bar room to test Aunt Freeloze's flip before setting out for the tedious ride over the western mountains. One day in the busy season when home, and store and tavern were all in her hands, while Moses was absent supervising the works on his many farms, Freeloze sold, among other things a teapot. The name of the customer who bought it was already on the book and he wished the teapot added to the list. In the hurry, and flurry, and many calls for her in the same moment, Freeloze forgot to make a minute of it, and when at night the thrifty woman remembered that it was to be charged, she had entirely forgotten who it was that bought it.

In vain she puzzled her brains, in vain she appealed to Moses to help her, his only reply being, "I snore! I snore! Freelove, you sold the teapot, you must get the pay."

With no idea of losing the price of the teapot, Freelove at last hit upon this device. She charged the article to every person whose name was entered on the store books. As they dropped in to settle, from time to time, it was presented to each in turn. When the surprised customer looked up from the book with the words, "Teapot! why I never had a teapot here." Freelove would say with the utmost coolness, "Didn't you? we'll just cross it out then." As she approached the bottom of the list she was rewarded by finding one who made no objection to the teapot, and with a sigh of relief she made the change, and crossed it off for the last time.

Uncle Moses and Aunt Freelove lie on the sunny hillside that overlooks their home, and the scenes of their earthly life. The lands they left are still in possession of their descendants; but the wheel goes around and not far in the future, as it requires no prophetic pen to tell, strangers will tread the fields and sit by the board, while the name of Wolcott, so long a part of the town, will be a memory.

In the early part of the year 1789, Elder Nathan Mason, with a number of his brethren, dissented from the strictness of the Six Principle plan, and formed a new church of their own called the Second Lanesborough church. We give here a fac simile letter of remonstrance from the old church to their dissenting brothers, also one from the dissenters, requesting the use of the Pork Lane meeting house to worship God in after the manner they had newly adopted, and the answer given to them by the sorrowing parent church. Quaint documents of a generation of men that have passed away, they are brown and old, whispering of a century gone, with their long S's, their scratches and their ink spots:

From the Second Baptist ch to the old Baptist ch in Lanesborough. Under the sense of your Holding the Right of the Meetinghouse We Pray you to Let Us Know Whene you Can grant us the Previledg of Meeting in the House to worship god Agreeable to the Dictates of Our Conciences as a chh.

Lanesborough, August the 26, A. D. 1790.

Sind By Order and in Behalf of the Church,

SQUIRE MUNRO, Church Clerk.

LANESBOROUGH, Aug. 26, 1790.

The Old Baptist Church in Lanesborough to the new Baptist church in the same Town sendeth greeting. In answer to your request which we received this day, we say—that inasmuch as you have left the Meeting house of your own accord, we have determined to keep up publick worship in the meeting house ourselves, on the first day of the week, begining at the usual hours that have been heretofore reserved for publick worship—also on the last thursday in every month we reserve for our Church meeting.

At other times when you have a mind to meet in our meeting house, either for publick worship or for other meetings of business, we are free and willing that you should have the use of it to improve as you shall see meet. Furthermore we are willing and desirous that Elder Mason would meet with us and improve with us whenever we shall be destitute of other gifts which the Church wants to improve,—and there is freedom and room for all of you to come and hear,—and further we mean to invite foreign ministers of good Character to improve in publick with us, and allow liberty for you to appoint meetings in our Meeting house for Elder Werden or any foreign minister of Character to meet in at any time hereafter, excepting the aforesaid times herein reserved by us for our publick worship and Church Meetings.

By order and in behalf of the Said Church.

JAMES BARKER, Chh Clerk.

At a meeting of the standing Baptist Church met in their Meeting-House in Lanesborough on the 12th of March, A. D. 1789. Voted and agreed unanimously that our Brethren Jesse Mason, Barnard Mason, Hezekiah Mason, and those other Brethren who have separated themselves from the standing Baptist church in Lanesborough, be admonished to repentance for their hasty and unwarrantable separation from the Church and causing Divisions, and appointed that committee to write a letter of Admonition to said Brethren and to Deliver it to them at their Meeting appointed to be held here at our Meeting house on the 26th Instant.

We the Subscribers being met together for the purpose aforesaid to our beloved Brethren abovesaid send greeting.

Dearly Beloved Brethren, it is with much grief and heaviness of heart that we have occasion to undertake in this matter, but in faithfulness to our Lord Jesus Christ, we must herely inform you that we do look upon it that you have sinned against God in your hasty separation from your Brethren and causing divisions in the Church. And we do hereby in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, and in behalf of the Church admonish you to repent of your aforesaid conduct and return again to your Brethren and place in the church from which you have swerved.

Signed by order and in behalf of the Church by

JAMES BARKER,	} Committee.
AARON SEMANS,	
WILLIAM CORNELL,	
NATHAN WOOD,	

Elder Nathan Mason held his place as pastor among the flock that thus separated from the First Lanesborough church in 1789, holding services in private houses; or in the Pork Lane meeting house by the courtesy of the First church.

During the year 1792, Elder John Leland came to Berkshire. He was then in the prime and heyday of his life, and ever after this year his name was interwoven with the history of the town. In 1793 he was associated with Elder Mason in the care of his new church, and because the latter was growing aged and infirm of health, Elder Leland became the more active pastor of the two. Full of physical vigor, eager in the work he had accepted as his own peculiar mission, he threw his whole soul into the religious efforts of the time, as well as the political with which he became connected in Virginia. A wonderful growth in both numbers and influence seemed to at-



tend this favored church. In 1789, when it first seceded there were 44 members, and in 1793, 163 names were written on the pages of its book, a gain of more than three times its original number in four years. Whether another relay from the church of the Six Principles was won by the gentle character and great godliness of Elder Mason to come over to his church—no one can tell. Whether a large revival gave the increase, there is no one left to say. It is certain, however, that the church on Pork Lane disappeared from view, and they who would chronicle its history to-day seek in vain for positive knowledge as to just how it vanished. No man knoweth aught of its last congregation, or the speaker who addressed it. Its site is pointed out where now the meadow grasses wave. The old building converted as early as 1800, into a dwelling, and at a later date into a barn, has fallen to decay and no vestige remains.

One more backward glance upon the quaint church may be of interest, one look at a letter written in that far-away time shows that the hand that penned and the brain that guided were those of a gentleman and a scholar, and leads to the conclusion that the disaffection might have rested with the dissenting brethren, while great caution and wisdom seemed to govern the church in its councils, represented as they are in this letter by their clerk, James Barker.

Hidden beneath the pertinent questions asked, and the somewhat gratuitous advice given in the last paragraph, one may, perhaps, detect a gentle and wholesome reproof, and smile at the manner in which it is given. The writer, after referring to a shameful, and reproachful treatment, received from one of the departing brothers, Deacon Daniel Irish, who had broken covenant with the church proper, goes on to say:

“We do not get satisfaction concerning the stumbling blocks mentioned. We ask you to own that you do not fellowship said Irish in his conduct. It certainly appears to us that you are acting designedly, rather than ignorantly, as you pretend. What did you mean by calling a council in the name of the church? What did *you* mean by publicly assuming to publish *your* church meetings in *our* church meeting days? and in our meeting house, taking possession in the name of the church? What could you mean by sending Deacon Irish to take lead in *our* meetings without consulting us, and what by calling *our* brother Dean to account to *you* at *your* meetings for his conduct? and furthermore, did you not tell *our* messengers at *your pretended church meeting* that they were not anybody, and were not looked upon as anybody? Can it be possible that this was all done, as you claim, through ignorance, and with no design to disannul the Baptist church? If you are, *indeed, thus ignorant*, you should be exceedingly *cautious* how you undertake to take upon yourselves *the lead* in matters of consequence. We have treated you as brethren—we still intend to do so, but we are not satisfied in the above matters, and ask you to take the above stumbling-blocks from our pathway.”

JAMES BARKER, Clerk.

Here the story ends. Whether Deacon Irish was sent again to minister to them in holy things without their consent, whether the stumbling blocks were eventually removed, so bringing them all over into the new church—minus the Sixth Principle—or whether the dissenters ever occupied the Pork Lane church again, we are entirely unable to state, for here the record ends, and the church with its Sixth Principle drops out of the history of Cheshire.

In 1792 the brick school house was built on the hill opposite the present church. The spot upon which it stood, with the play ground surrounding it, was a gift to the town from Squire Ezra Barker. It was a square structure, with windows on three sides. Between the two south windows was an elevated platform upon which was a high desk for the teacher's own use. On either side of his desk, and extending across to the adjoining corners thence around the room were three tiers of benches, known as the back seat, the middle seat, and the low one. Entering school in this building, as many children did at three years of age, they were promoted as they grew in stature, from year to year until they finally attained to the dignity of the highest seat, the only gradation that this school knew. In summer a lady taught the children of the hamlet. In winter, when the large boys and girls came to the new school house, a master handled the ferule, made the quill pens, taught Webster's elementary from B-a-ba, ker-ker, Baker, to incompatibility, and ciphered with the big boys through the "Rule of Three."

In this building the town meetings were held after 1793, and attention given largely to highways, bridges, and schools. It is scarcely possible at this late era to follow all of these roads, and the changes that have taken place. Such a course would require the services of a civil engineer, and even then the undertaking would be fraught with extreme difficulty, would fill of itself an ordinary history, and be dull reading at last. Streams were bridged, and roads improved as time and travel demanded that they should be. The money being appropriated for the use of schools, districts were laid out, and school buildings erected as rapidly as the population made them necessary.

In 1793, the subject of incorporating a town, that should comprise an area of 1,800 acres taken from the adjoining towns, was much agitated. The first record that we find is headed "Concerning the town of Cheshire being incorporated:"

"We the subscribers do hereby Covenant, Promise, and engage to each advance the several sums of money to which our names are herein set towards paying the charges of the Committee appointed by the General Court and to see the money paid in to the Clerk for that purpose by the first Monday in September next."

Wardwell Green,	3s.	paid	Jon. Remington,	18s.	paid
Benj. Brown,	2s. 6d.	paid	Elisha Brown,	12s.	paid
Daniel Bidellecome,	4s. 6d.	paid	Daniel Brown,	18s.	paid
Allen Briggs,	4s.	paid	John Remington,	4s.	paid
James Barker,	6s.	paid	Timothy Mason,	6s.	paid
Harmon Briggs,	3s.	paid	Moses Woleott,	6s.	paid
Calvin Hall,	6s.	paid	Levi Mason,	4s.	
Samuel W. Church,	3s.	paid	Aaron Seemans,	6s.	paid
Moses Perkins,	6s.	paid	Brooks Mason,	6s.	paid
Darius Bucklin,	6s.	paid	Daniel Coman,	6s.	paid
Squire Munroe,	3s.	paid	Peleg Green,	3s.	paid
Jon. Richardson, Jr.,	10s.		Perley Phillips,	1s. 6d.	
Nicholas Brown,	4s.	paid	Samuel Bliss,	2s.	paid
William Whitaker,	3s.	paid	Asahel Potter,	2s.	paid
William Brown,	4s.		Rufus Carpenter,		paid
Hezekiah Mason,	6s.	paid			

At a meeting of a number of the Inhabitants belonging to Adams, Lanesborough, Windsor and New Ashford, petitioners to be incorporated with a township being met together at the new Brick School-House in Lanesborough on the 7th day of August, 1792, to consider of what is necessary further to be done to forward the prayer of the Petition. Harmon Briggs, Esq., was chosen moderator and James Baker clerk. Voted that we will have a committee of nine men appointed to wait upon the committee appointed by the General Court to meet at Col. Remington's on the first Monday of September next. Voted that the following men be appointed a Committee: Jonathan Remington, Esq., Capt. Daniel Brown, James Barker, Esq., Elisha Brown, Seth Jones, Allen Briggs, Timothy Mason, Daniel Coman, Capt. Darius Bucklin. Voted that a subscription be made to raise money to defray the expenses of the Court's Committee, and that the money be paid to the clerk by the time the committee meet. Voted that the meeting be adjourned to the second Monday in September next to do what other business may be regularly there to be done.

	£	s.	d.
Paid the committee in wages \$3 each	1	16	0
Paid Col. Remington's expenses,	2	7	6
<hr/>			
Paid Asa Wilmarth \$8 for going to Lenox	4	3	6
Paid Dr. Golt \$8 wanting 8d.,	2	7	4
Orders paid John Burchet,	0	5	6
<hr/>			
	7	4	4

At a meeting of the petitioners for a new town, met at the Brook School-House in Lanesborough on the 22d day of October, 1792. Lieut. Timothy Mason was chosen Moderator and James Barker clerk. Voted to appoint a committee of three to inspect into the outlines of said township and make such bounds and movements as they see necessary and make the out bounds as explicit as they can, in order to be laid before the General Court. Voted that James Barker, Esq., and Brooks Mason and Jonathan Fish and Hezekiah Mason and Elisha Brown be a committee for that purpose. Voted to appoint Capt. Daniel Brown agent, to repair to Boston to prosecute the matter aforesaid at the General Court. Voted to adjourn this meeting for two weeks, then to meet at this place at 3 o'clock p. m. November 5th, 1792, met according to adjournment. Voted that our agent move to have our town Incorporated by the name of Venum, and that we nominate Col. Remington to issue his warrant to call the town together.

History is silent as to the reasons for changing the name from Vernum to Cheshire in the final decision; but tradition says that it was because the town was developing into so fine a grazing and dairying country like Cheshire in England. In March 1793 the grant was actually given, and Cheshire was a town. The form was very irregular, turning and winding, and twisting its border line until twenty-three corners are counted in its circuit. For what reason this zig-zag course is taken it seems difficult to say. Some logical person claims that the Baptist proclivities were so strong that it was deemed wise to rule out all of a contrary faith, therefore the surveyor was bidden to set his compass, and run his chain in a way to exclude all pedobaptist farmers. While, perhaps, one would not like to risk his veracity on this statement, the fact remains that the farm of Medad King was the only one retained belonging to a Presbyterian. The geographical center of the town came in this farm and regularly, in rain or shine, the horses of Mr. King went over the mountain on Sunday morning carrying the family to the Presbyterian church at Lanesborough. The following is the warrant for the first town meeting held in the new town.

Berkshire, ss. To Peleg Green, lately of Lanesborough, within the said county of Berkshire, gentlemen, greeting: Whereas the Great and General Court of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, began and holden at Boston on the last Wednesday of January, A. D., 1793, did incorporate a part of the town of Adams, Lanesborough, Windsor and New Ashford into a Township by the name of Cheshire, and appointed me the subscriber to call on the Inhabitants of the said Incorporation qualified to vote in Town affairs, to meet together at some suitable place, within the bounds thereof, to choose Town Officers and other matters necessary to be done at said meeting. There are therefore in the name and by order of the said Commonwealth to require you forthwith to notify the said Inhabitants to meet together at the Brick School-House near Moses Wolcott's in the said town of Cheshire on the first Monday of April next, at ten of the clock in the forenoon for the purposes above mentioned. Also notify the Inhabitants qualified to vote for Governor, Lieut. Governor, Councillor and Senators, that that is the time by order of law to vote for said offices. Also the time appointed by the Great and General Court for the choice of Representations for the second District and for the County of Hampshire to set in the Congress of the United States of America.

N. B.—You are to take notice to warn all those Inhabitants qualified as aforesaid living in what is called New Providence, which once belonged to the said town of Adams, also those which belonged to Lanesborough and New Ashford; all east of the top of Saddle Mountain, as far south as to Pitts Barker's south line; from thence eastward of said line of Lotts to Muddy Brook, thence all east of said brook as far south as to include Stephen Whipple, and Isaac Horton, and Brooks Mason and Edward Wood, and all northward of Brooks Mason's south line straight, to Windsor line, and in Windsor as far south and east as to include William Felshaw and Mr. Burch, and William Whitaker so from said Birch's east line to the north line of said Windsor. Hereof fail not and make due return of this warrant with your doings therein unto my self before the opening of said Meeting. Given under my hand and seal at Cheshire aforesaid the 16th day of March, in the year of our Lord, 1793.

JAMES BARKER, Just. of Peace.

April 1st, 1793.—At a town meeting held in the brick school house, Col. Jonathan Remington was chosen moderator; James Barker, town clerk; Elisha Brown, town treasurer; Jonathan Richardson, Jr., Daniel Brown and Timothy Mason, selectmen; Peckham Barker, constable, and to collect rates for sixpence on a pound; Jonathan Richardson, Jr., Daniel Brown, Timothy Mason, Hezekiah Mason and William Jenkins, assessors; Daniel Mason and John Bennet, fence viewers. Indeed it seemed that almost every man had an appointment. Benjamin Brown and Jonathan Fish were chosen to view the fences and as field drivers. In 1794, the town voted to allow James Barker 18s. for his services as town clerk. Query: did James Barker make his fortune? Hezekiah Mason, John Remington, sealers of leather; Nathan Wood and Daniel Read, hog reeves; Daniel Brown and Daniel Biddlecome, pound keepers. May 27th 1793, voted to raise £50 for the support of a school or schools. School money divided among children under twenty-one.

From 1793 the history of Cheshire as a town begins. In 1794 at the four corners upon the brow of the hill over which the valley road runs, a common was given by two land owners in the town, Capt. Daniel Brown and Squire Ezra Barker, and upon the common a lot to the Baptist church of Cheshire where was erected a commodious belfry crowned edifice which was dedicated on Christmas day, 1794. "What shall we do when doctors disagree," is a trite old question that has passed into a proverb, and applies equally well to the historian. We are met by conflicting statements concerning the names, by which the various Baptist churches have been known. The Stafford's Hill church is recognized by common consent as the First church. After the organization of the town in 1793, the Six Principle church seems according to some, to be known as the Second church, and the dissenting members after the erection of their house of worship took the name of the Third church, while yet another going out at a later period was called Elder Sweet's church. Another class of writers either ignore the Six Principle or continue to speak of it as the "Second Lanesborough" thus giving the Second Cheshire to the dissenters, and the Third Cheshire to Elder Sweet's flock. As there seems to be about equal authority, we choose the former plan, and shall speak of the church at Cheshire corners as the Third Cheshire church. The building erected in 1794 was a roomy one. Two massive doors at the west admitted the church goers into a large square vestibule formed by the tower. A smaller door to the south opened into the same entrance room. Wide winding stairs went up on the north end of this hall to the gallery above, a gallery which encircled the audience room on three sides. In this gallery directly in front of the pulpit, were the seats occupied by the singers, before them the red moreen curtains hung on brass rings, and swung from a brass rod. Entering at the lower door a broad aisle led up to

the high pulpit, a long, narrow crooked flight of stairs terminated in the square structure thus designated. Upon the scarlet cushion, studded thick as stars, with brass nails, rested the Bible and hymn book, a cushioned seat accommodated the preacher who, if a short man, was compelled to stand on a cricket to bring his head above the railing of the desk. High upon the wall behind him was suspended the great sounding board, while far below, and just in front was the narrow, box-like seat designed for the deacons, the table before it where the communion service was spread and where, with the heavy pall sweeping the floor, the coffin, with the dead, stood during sermon and prayer. Two aisles, with pews on either side ended in the row of seats at the right and left of the pulpit. One can scarcely say to what style of architecture this building belonged. Fluted pillars supported the galleries, and were placed at equal intervals throughout the audience room. The pews were square with sides so high that a child could neither see, or be seen when seated within the inclosure. A grown person could look about from pulpit to gallery, and upon the pews of his neighbors. A door that opened upon the aisle was closed and fastened with a wooden button, cushions and carpets were rare. The seats ran around three sides of the square pew, and stowed away in the corner with head leaned comfortably against the high back, this was a favorable position for a nap.

When Elder Leland of saintly memory in his vicinity, first began his labors he found that to some, who had arisen at an early hour, milked their cows, made their cheese, and driven through the hot sun for miles to attend service, the temptation to a quiet snooze could not be overcome. This troubled the good Elder, and he longed to break it up. One day when he noticed the boys in the gallery striving to drop a white bean fastened to a string into the wide open mouth of a sleeper below he could endure it no longer. Catching the big pulpit bible in his hands, he rapped with tremendous force upon the desk—three successive blows fell—each louder than the preceding, and calling the sleeper by name, he shouted in tones like thunder, “wake up! wake up!” This had the desired effect, and they were few indeed who cared to indulge in a nap under Elder Leland’s preaching. The boys usually occupied the south gallery, and it became advisable to seat one of the deacons on the high seat that they might be under his watchcare. The pews in the main part were owned by the proprietors according to the aid given in building.

Oh, the summer Sundays in that old church! Within the cool shade of those sacred walls the golden sunbeams poured through the windows with their countless panes of glass, falling in dusty beams over pews, and pulpit stairs, the breezes loaded with the perfume of rose and apple blossoms stole in at door and open window, lifting the snowy locks from off the pastor’s

brow, fluttering the leaves of the open books, gently moving to and fro the red bandana of a good, old deacon whose failing health caused him to fear the draft. The prayer, the psalm, the text, the sprigs of dill and lavender. The tunes, Old Hundred, Meer, Balerna, and "Shepherds all sitting on the ground, the angel of the Lord came down, and glory shown around." One might almost hear the rings slide on the rod and the tuning fork as Brother Brown pitched the tune, even the humming runs along the ear as the tenor, treble and counter, each in turn, caught the note as it fell from the fork, and with a fa-sol-la swelled into tune. They stood in a line, from the bass to the fair haired girl that sung alto at the end of the row, and whose voice, growing sweeter with every bar, swept from choir to breathless pew, and filled every corner of the great room. Morning and afternoon services were held in this church, and people coming from a distance brought their own dinners, unfastened their horses from the vehicles, gave them their noonday meal of corn and oats, then walked with measured tread up and down the wayside, loitered amid the graves in the burying ground close by, or stood apart in little knots talking in low mysterious tones, discussing the crops, the weather, perhaps the latest bit of gossip and sometimes, a group of two or three gray-haired men and women sat by the western church door and lighted their pipes by the sun glass.

This church joined the Shaftsbury association in 1789, and continued increasing in so rapid a ratio that in 1800 it numbered 394 members. Elder Leland remained its associate pastor until 1797. Revivals in Cheshire and surrounding towns kept up large congregations in the, *then* new meeting house, and at each returning conference meeting one or more was added as members to the church. But the days of blessing passed away, and as a more worldly feeling obtained leading members in the church sometimes indulged in strong language, and bitter invectives toward one another. Each one was willing to draw the reins of church discipline tightly and strongly around every member but himself. As Elder Leland beheld this, and met them around the table of the Lord, it pained him. He had never, under the most favorable circumstances, enjoyed the Lord's Table and now it grew irksome, and trying to him, but what was he to do with these somewhat refractory members? They were people of high respectability, of unquestioned position in both church and society, and were furthermore among his most intimate friends and neighbors. So, resolving to remember his own short comings, he would try to be forbearing with the faults of others. However he was not able to overcome the feeling and in August, 1797, he left Cheshire to travel and preach in the south, and never afterwards assumed the pastoral care of the Cheshire church so far as the breaking of bread was concerned.

When the country was still new the dead were often buried on the home farm beneath the shade of some tree, on the bank of some murmuring brook, in a secluded spot convenient for the friends to visit. Many of these burial places still remain and have been beautifully described in the pen pictures of Judge Barker. But soon after the building of the new church in 1794, a public burying ground was also laid out across the street, and farther to the north than the meeting house.

A sexton was secured, provided with a pick ax and shovel, engaged to dig the graves, toll the bell, and take charge of the bier and pall.

It was the custom, then, to toll the bell for the dead, a custom which should never be suffered to die out. Whenever a resident in the parish died, this passing bell sounded—stroke upon stroke—long and solemn, they pealed out over the echoing hills. Sometimes at noon when busy with the cares of the day—sometimes in the early morning hours—sometimes in the dead of night they roused the sleepers to tell them that one more of their number had gone out alone to solve the last great mystery.

The funerals were always attended in the church. Winding over the hills, along the quiet roads, the procession slowly toiled as the bell intoned the way. After the last hymn, and the benediction, the bier was placed upon the lawn before the church door, the coffin put upon and the pall thrown over it. In the bright sunshine of summer, or beneath the leaden skies of November, all crowded around for a parting look. The last farewell taken, the sexton fastened the coffin lid to its place, the bearers took their station by the bier, the procession formed again, and with the minister at the head walked to the grave yard where the relatives gathered around the open grave, the coffin with its precious freight was lowered, shovel after shovel full of earth thrown in, the sods arranged upon the top, and then with the final prayer over, all turned away.

In 1790, sometime during the month of February Jesse Jenks arrived at his nephew's house in Adams. He came from Cumberland, R. I., and brought with him on horse back as much gold and silver as a man could lift. Mr. Jenks purchased the farm opposite the glebe land on Stafford's Hill, being attracted to that spot as it was the most thrifty village by all means that the vicinity could show.

In 1791, Mr. Edward Martin came up from Barrington, R. I., reaching New Providence also in the month of February. He brought his household goods, wife and children, on sleds drawn by oxen. Samuel Martin, known so long as Deacon Martin, was six years old at the time of their arrival. Mr. Martin bought the farm—which has never passed from the possession of the Martins, and is located on the direct road to Adams—of Mrs. Hannah Cushing, widow of Caleb Cushing.



Samuel Martin, son of Edward, succeeded his father on this farm. He married Sarah, daughter of Hezekiah Mason, and granddaughter of Elder Nathan Mason. Orrin Martin, son of Samuel, lives in the village, and Frank Martin, grandson of Deacon Martin owns and manages the original farm.

The low store built by Moses Wolcott adjoining his inn proved to be a leading place of business for many years. As Moses Wolcott increased in prosperity he gradually enlarged his operations. In addition to the dairies from the many farms he owned he bought those of the surrounding farmers. He put up a cheese house just south of his own house, and stored the golden products of the farms, tier after tier of cheese, and row after row of jars packed with sweet fall butter, which he held until the proper time to ship and sell. Other industries developed, a grist-mill was built on the brook north of the kitchen. The ruins still stand, the brook laughs along its stony bed, tumbles over the white boulders as fresh and young as when it turned the wheel, now crumbling away. This Kitchen, a little square hollow in the hills with stone steps leading down to it, was so named by the first pioneers on account of its form. Like the dwellers among the Tyrol mountains in Switzerland, these people at the Kitchen might look up from the chimneys to see if the cows were coming down the narrow paths. Once upon a time, (as all stories begin), there lived in one of these cottages on the brink of the brook a doctor. Not having a large store of "the root of all evil," he could not bestow a generous share upon his wife. Wishing very much one spring for some money she revolved the wish in her mind, again and again, until she decided to sell her hair. It was silky, glossy and abundant, it brought a good price, and with the money thus obtained, she purchased a lottery ticket and drew a thousand dollars which was a vast amount for a woman to own—a large sum, indeed, for a man, as men counted money then,—when one of these provincial men said to a neighbor one day:

"If I had a thousand dollars I would be quite willing to die."

"Why! why!" said the neighbor, "what good would your money do you if you were to die?"

"Oh, I'd have the name of dying a rich man."

A large distillery stood where the watering trough beyond G. Z. Dean's store now stands, and was managed by Capt. Brown. The iron ore beds on the farm of Jesse Mason, (afterwards owned by James Brown) were worked extensively during the year of 1790. The ore was taken to Dalton.

At the Kitchen, Nathan Wood had a grist and saw-mill, and a little later a distillery on the old Lanesborough road near the town line. Over in the Jacques neighborhood was a fulling and carding-mill. Peppermint was grown quite extensively and the essence manufactured.

Captain Daniel Brown erected one of the first frame buildings in town on the farm now owned by William A. Pomeroy, and in 1797, wishing to make his home at the corners put up the beautiful house where he spent the remainder of his days, known now as the Hoosac Valley Hotel. An elegant place, indeed, it was for any time; but for those days it must have been something very superior.

Standing on a grassy knoll, a little back from the village street, with towering trees to shade it from the sun, it looked, then, upon the level meadows of the Hoosac and the mountains beyond, without a house to interfere until the river was crossed.

A low red gate gave entrance into the garden, across the street. A broad, well beaten path led down the entire length, bordered by beds of flowers, masses of mignonette, sweet peas, asphodel and marigolds, while sage, fennel, sweet marjoram, thyme and summer savory grew beyond. Farther down the garden were thrifty rows of vegetables of every variety grown on a gentleman's grounds in this year of grace 1884. The Kitchen Brook which came down from the hill at the rear of the fields, was divided and turned by the Captain. Part of its waters flowed on in their usual channel, and part were brought in troughs through the fields. The brook was thus made to cross the street, into the garden where down its entire length it followed an artificial channel. All along its banks were lilies, flags, mosses, cresses, and water loving plants in profusion. A grassy margin around the outer edge accommodated currant and gooseberry bushes, and everywhere grew and bloomed in perfect luxuriance, roses of all sorts, from the purest white to rarest red. Grape vines, plum and apple trees flourished there. Between the brook and the house stood a cider-mill, and up the banks was a rustic saw-mill surrounded by white birch trees.

The spacious house contained room for children and grandchildren, sisters, nephews, and nieces, and the poor were not turned empty from the door. The Captain's heart responded to every call. To be poor and suffering was sufficient passport to his bounty. A man of good, practical sense he was fond of a good joke, and many anecdotes told of him to-day, give an idea of the sly humor, and the keen enjoyment experienced when listening to, or perpetrating one.

When the great cheese of 1803, manufactured of the united curds of the town dairies was made in Cheshire, it created quite an excitement throughout the country, and the following fall Captain Brown, and some friend from Cheshire, who were traveling up the Mohawk valley, to buy cattle and drive them home, stopped each night at some inn along the valley, and when the day's work was done, and suppers eaten, they sat in the bar-room

chatting with the farmers and villagers of the neighborhood. Usually the conversation turned upon the mammoth cheese, when it was ascertained that the travelers were from Cheshire, and the companion of the Captain explained all about it very readily, and wound up by saying:

“Captain Brown and I put in fifty cows’ milk.”

The Captain listened to the story night after night, without comment, but when he reached home he could not refrain from telling the story where it was well known that the Captain put in the milk of forty-nine cows, while the friend only added one.

One gloomy fall night Mrs. Brown sat knitting by the fireside, some neighbors had dropped in for a call, and were talking busily of witches as they had seen them down country. The children were sitting by, listening with eyes wide open, and hearts all a flutter. The Captain was going backward and forward, storing his meat in the cellar for winter use, when Mrs. Brown, impatient at the hobgoblin tales, said:

“Here, Captain, I wish you would stop these folks telling witch stories. The children will be so frightened they’ll run at their own shadows.”

“Stop them?” said the Captain, as he stalked through the room, “if my children don’t know enough not to believe such trash I’ll flog them all around.”

It was one hot day in summer, the village street was almost deserted; the houses were closed, and everything was quiet except before the little store of Moses Wolcott, where a band of villagers were gathered in the drowsy air, canvassing the weather, and telling stories; when over the hill from the north a man appeared on horseback. Slowly advancing he drew rein before the men clustered upon the store steps, and after passing the time of day, asked if any of them had seen or heard aught of a stray horse.

All answered in the negative without hesitation until at last Captain Daniel said, “I can tell you, sir, I think, where you can find your horse.”

The stranger eagerly inquired the way while all the “lookers on in Venice,” cast looks of questioning wonder upon the Captain, and silently waited to hear what he had to say.

“Well, my good man, you turn right around, and go back until you pass Williamstown. Just before reaching Stamford you will see a path leading from the main road; take that direction, and follow on. As you advance the way will grow narrower, and more uneven, until it will be but little more than a bridle path with, here and there a gate, and now and then a pair of bars. You will come at last to a little whitewashed hut. In that hut you’ll find a negro living. That negro has got your horse. Tell him that you know he has the animal.”

The man expressed the deepest thanks, and turning, retraced his steps.

Scarcely was he beyond hearing when all with one accord exclaimed: "What did you know about the man's horse, Captain Brown?"

"Nothing," was the quiet reply; "only I didn't believe that it was off down here, and I thought he had better be getting toward home, as night was coming down."

With a little laughing, and joking the matter was dropped, and forgotten, until when the 16th of August came, Captain Brown and one of the men that sat upon the doorstep of Moses Wolcott's store, drove up to the celebration of the Bennington Battle. About the middle of the day, as they were mingling in the crowd they saw a man at a little distance elbowing his way through the throng, making a frantic effort to reach them. Both men recognized the face as soon as their eyes fell upon it. "There, Captain, you'll catch it, now. That's the man that lost his horse, and he's after you and no mistake." "Yes, I guess that's him," replied the Captain, as he looked behind him; but there seemed to be no chance for escape in the blocking crowd, and he therefore awaited the approach of the stranger, who, when he came up seized his hand, and burst into the most profuse expressions of thankfulness, explaining:

"I followed your directions that day, and found everything precisely as you predicted I would. The crookedest, stoniest, steepest path that Christian or Turk ever trod was that one; but I found the nigger there. How ever did you know about that nigger? Well! he was there anyhow, and he had the horse. He denied it first, just as you said but I stuck to it that I knew he had my horse, and sure enough he had, and I got the creature, and now you must let me pay you something for the information. The Captain protested against having any knowledge of the affair, affirmed that it was only done in a joke, and positively refused any remuneration. The man from Stratford would not believe that Captain Brown was telling him the truth, and went his way blessing him.

This was a strange coincidence surely, and furnished a very funny tale to tell in the village bar-room for many a year. If every professed fortune teller could guess as correctly, their fortunes would be gathered in a trice.

At Warwick, in the olden days lived Chloe Bucklin, to whom, if we can trust rumor, many a village swain was devoted; but who had chosen Daniel Brown as her best loved admirer, and who had answered "Yes" when he proposed to make her his wife and take her to the new home he planned to build among the hills and mountains of Berkshire. Captain Brown's first visit to New Providence was before his marriage, and busy with buying land, and arranging for a home in the wilderness, he did not return to his affianced as soon as he promised. Her neighbors used banteringly to say, "Ah, Chloe! Daniel has forgotten you; you'll never see him again." But

knowing well the sterling worth of her adventurous lover, her trust in him remained unshaken, and her patient waiting was at last rewarded by his return, soon after which they were married and started for their new home. Her outfit was three chairs, a table and bedstead. She seems to have possessed a great many attributes well calculated to help her husband on to success, and her sympathies for those around her who were less fortunate than herself in life, are well illustrated by the following story. Shoes and stockings were luxuries only indulged in during the severity of winter, and for church wear in summer. Many an old lady now living, has told us how carefully they were kept in a bag during the week and carried in their hands until the last hill this side the church was reached, where setting down upon some rock or bank they would put them on. Returning, at the same place they would be taken off, and when home again they were carefully brushed, and restored to the bag until another Sabbath. Captain Brown's wealth made this economy unnecessary in his family, but one summer Sunday "Aunt Chloc" as she was familiarly called, meeting an old friend from the back road asked where her girls were, as she saw none of them at church, to which the good woman replied that "they had no stockings to wear and were ashamed to come." "Why" said Mrs. Brown "that's no matter; tell them to come along next Sunday and my girls shall go without to keep them company" It is said that true to her word, the remainder of the season the daughters of the rich Captain came to church minus hose.

Two of these daughters were sent to a school at Albany, and received advantages far in advance of most of the village girls. The daughters of Mr. Tibbits at the gambrel-roofed house, and the daughter of Squire Barker being the only ones thus favored. Dr. John Lyon settled at the village in the valley after his return from Bennington and practised his profession.

Dr. Nathaniel Gott was also practitioner at that place, living in a house that stood upon the lot opposite the farm house of Nathaniel Bliss.

Dr. William Jenks settled at Stafford's Hill, on the land opposite the glebe farm which was purchased in 1790, by Charles Jenks, on his arrival at the Hill from Cumberland, R. I. Here he died early, leaving a young widow, who afterward married Dr. David Cushing. Dr. Cushing bought, prior to his marriage with Mrs. Jenks, the house opposite the present Prince farm on the brow of the Hill, and which also belonged to Col. Joab. Upon his marriage to Mrs. Dr. Jenks, he disposed of the place, took the house down and removed to the one opposite the church property, where he remained until his death. Dr. David Cushing, like Dr. Jenks, died young, at a little past forty, leaving his wife a widow for the second time while yet in her youth, comparatively. On the place where her husband died she remained, reared her children and lived to an advanced age. In

the grave-yard on the breezy hill that seems so near the blue mountain tops, they all lie, side by side, three graves, just beyond that of their old pastor, in the shade, cast by a tall cherry tree. There, too, are the Wilmarths, the Masons, Capt. Converse and many beside of the people whose houses and well arranged gardens stood along that hillside when Dr. David Cushing ministered to them professionally. These graves were made when busy care and toil were all around. Now there are no houses, no people, no hum of industry, even the very birds seem to have migrated.

There are two children left of this family, one, Dr. Erastus Cushing of Cleveland, Ohio, the other, Mrs. Charles Bowen, mother of H. C. Bowen, Postmaster of Cheshire. To the latter this farm has fallen, although her own home is in Adams, she will never allow this spot of land to pass from her possession.

In 1793, the town voted not to allow inoculation to be set up. In February, 1794, they voted to allow a pest-house near Brooks Mason's Muddy Brook, one by Benjamin Bliss's, Stafford's Hill, another near Dea. Carpenter's, Pork Lane and employ one doctor. Small-pox was a scourge in early days, sweeping through all countries, visiting palace and cottage alike. Jenner was watching his milk maids on the Rhine, and studying into the charmed amulet they seem to wear, but vaccination was a thing of the future. Inoculation was the best preventive known to the medical fraternity. Pest-houses, built in some lonely, far away spot where they could not contaminate the well, were kept by some hired person who had had the small pox. People taken there were inoculated for the disease, and by a proper course of diet, and correct treatment were able to have the plague somewhat lighter than if it came upon them unaware.

During this decade and the last the terrors of small-pox were added to the ravages of war. Many continental soldiers were buried in camp and field, and very many of the Cheshire volunteers fell victims to it, and never returned. Mount Amos was the spot where the first pest-house was located, and where some went, and submitted to inoculation, rather than to take the risk of having it when on the march or in the hospital even. There is an old pathetic story connected with a little grove of trees that lies by the side of the road leading down from the lone house on Mount Amos, of how an old lady belonging to one of the first families had died of this dread disease, and according to the code of the times had been refused burial in any church yard. She was buried just outside the fence, and for generations thereafter her kinsfolk were separated from her by this barrier.

In 1783, slavery existed under the law, and some of the citizens of Cheshire held slaves prior to that date. The trade was abolished by an act of 1788. From a correspondence still extant between Elder Peter Wer-

den's church and Major Samuel Low, it is evident that Major Low had owned, and freed a negro girl known as Mary Diamond, as well as her children Tony and Violet. These latter he had retained in his service and taken with him to Palatine, N. Y., whither he had removed. The Adams church writes to the Major that Mary fears he is holding Tony and Violet against their will in a state of slavery, and insists that he shall relieve the uneasiness of Mary's mind without delay. Major Low's reply is a model of coolness and spirited defense, admitting himself unworthy, he goes on in these words :

"I return you my sincere thanks for your kind letter in which you inform me so agreeably that Mary D. is in some trouble lest I may retain her children against their will. I hold as you say liberty and freedom as a fixed principle and at the beginning of the war declared my house free. Have I counteracted my declaration? Hath not Mary D. been free? Tony was 21 last March, and all who know him, know him to be a bad boy. I have paid much money for him, I am justly entitled to his services and Violet's until such time as they fairly recompense me for my expense and trouble in rearing them. Should this not be satisfactory to my brethren I will leave the matter to indifferent parties."

The house occupied by Major Low, and where he owned these slaves still stands and is now owned by Mr. Martin Jenks. Major Low kept his word and eventually let Tony and Violet go for themselves. Violet returned to Adams where she married a worthless "nigger" by the name of Jake who led her a life of such questionable happiness that she was finally compelled to abandon him, upon which occasion Jake declared himself satisfied with the plan, but insisted upon dividing their worldly goods to please his own desires.

"Now," said Jake, "here am de house—I'll perwidge it. I'll keep the inside, you can take the outside. Here am de pig and the dorg. I'll keep de pig, you can take the dorg. I'll keep the bugalow (the bureau) and de crockedy ware (the china crockery)" and so on until poor Violet found herself with nothing of value for her side of the house, and learned, perhaps, that even liberty had its drawbacks.

It was in 1792 of this decade that the dark day settled over the New England States. At Cheshire the people arose to find everything as usual, but as the morning advanced a strange light broke over the landscape, a dim, yellowish tint, which gradually grew from dimness to a gloom like twilight, and then to a darkness like night. The cows came up to the pasture bars, and lowed as if anxiously asking for protection, the fowls all went to roost, the birds sought their nests. The stars came out in the sky as thick as at midnight, and men and women waited in fear and trembling to see what the end would be. Some feared that the Day of Doom had come; but the darkness wore off by degrees, not long afternoon the sun

broke forth, the gray light faded away, heavy hearts beat lightly once more and the terror of the hour was over, although for years those who witnessed the phenomena told often of the frightful, unnatural scene.

The family of the Bliss's are descendants of Nathaniel Bliss who came into the settlement at an early period, and lived on a farm at Muddy Brook, near where the cross-road connects the old with the new road. There were four sons, who settled in this vicinity, three of them, John, Nathaniel and Orrin, on farms that lie along the old road over the hills. Nathaniel Bliss, Sen., is spoken of as Leftenant Nathaniel Bliss.

The farms owned by John and Orrin Bliss have passed from the possession of the families. They themselves moved from them into the village where they died. Their children are all gone from the familiar places, and the chronicler of these people and their times is compelled to add these families to the long list of absent ones, whose names we find no more, save as we sadly read them on the marble, and the yellow pages of town or church book.

The farm of Nathaniel Bliss, Jr., is still owned by his children, and is managed by the three sons who have always remained there, Granville, Clinton and Milton. An older son, Henry Bliss, is a well-known lawyer, who has been for many years in successful and active practice at Adams. As this town does not seem to offer sufficient charms to the members of this profession to ever hold them within its borders it may be pardoned for alluding, now and then, to those who have gone forth from its farms and homes to meet success, in this direction at other towns.

According to tradition Nathaniel Bliss, the son, was connected with some of the engagements in the later wars.

The Southworth farm house is on a knoll at the summit of a hill which this old road climbs. It is a low, long building, guileless of paint, and has never been rebuilt. It was once the gay home of fair girls; now the spirit of melancholy seems to pervade it, a narrow, over-grown path leads to the door-way, the steep roof rests upon the low doors and windows, the wainscoting is half way to the ceiling; it is all as it used to be, and yet there is nothing left to tell of the merry voices that echoed there, or the light feet that tripped over the meadows, or followed along the pasture paths. The wind, the sun, and the birds are just the same; down the country road, over a stone wall, lie the graves of many who used to know these places; upon the slabs of marble are carved a cherub's head, or perchance, a weeping willow, and below the name of Southworth, and, sometimes, that of a neighbor. It was upon the farm at Muddy Brook, now owned by the Chadwicks, that Squire James Barker bid his son to place the stock when he sent him to Berkshire in advance of the family in 1773, speaking of it as his southernmost farm.



## CHAPTER IV.

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FROM 1797—1807.

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THE GREAT REFORMATION. THE BIG CHEESE. VACCINATION. JOHN VINCENT. DEATH OF ELDER NATHAN MASON. ELDER LELAND'S VIEWS ON COMMUNION. ELDER LEMUEL COVELL, PASTOR THIRD CHURCH. THOMPSON J. SKINNER, DEFAULTER. CAPTAIN BROWN'S LOSSES. DR. MASON BROWN. MASONIC LODGES. JIM FISKE.

In 1797, after Elder Leland's return from a trip into Virginia he refused to take pastoral charge of the Third Church, and we hear of the members sending every second month to adjoining towns for an "administrator" to visit and break bread with them.

In 1799 a mighty influence broke out among the people, leading to what has come down through the years as "The Great Reformation." Many ministers from abroad assisted Elder Leland and the home pastors, preaching by night and by day to throngs of people in the church on the green, to gatherings in the "West school house," as that on the hill beyond the kitchen was commonly known, as well as in a little brown school house recently put up at Federal City. The brook at the kitchen and the river under the shade of the willows, were visited daily by such as wished baptism and the following crowds who went to witness the ordinance.

Among the ministers from abroad was one bearing the name of Kies, a young man, but very devout; he had listened to the sermons, and the rejoicings of the converts, had joined in prayer as the elder ministers led the way, and now and then exhorted sinners in a morning meeting of prayer. That was all—for there were present the mighty preachers of that day, upon whose words all hung with breathless attention.

At length it came to the mind of some brother that no one had asked the young man to preach to the congregation and forthwith he was called upon and invited to give a sermon the next evening in the West school house. The minister objected. He was young and inexperienced, older workers in the vineyard were so much better fitted to gather the fruit, he had very little faith in his ability. Surely no one would go to the school house when

they heard that "only Brother Kies" was going to speak. However a refusal would not be accepted and the appointment was made. All night the minister was troubled at the prospect before him, he could not rest so disturbed were his slumbers. To stand before Leland, Hull, Werden, Mason and many besides who had, for years, stood upon the watchtowers and high places, proclaiming the doctrines so dear to them, was impossible, he could not do so presumptuous a thing, so at an early hour he again went around to those who had made the arrangement, and begged to be released. No one would go the school house—he knew—emptiness and barrenness would be the result; but still they held to the appointment.

It is said that the last hours of the afternoon were spent in an agony of soul, by Elder Kies. He could decide upon no subject, or call to his mind any words that seemed to him fitting for the occasion, and repeated to all he chanced to meet, "There will be nothing but empty seats at the school house, I am sorry the arrangement has been made."

The hour drew near, the hour of early candle lighting, as the appointments to those school house, evening gatherings were always given out, and it was a custom well understood that ever family, or every person, was expected to bring a candlestick containing a tallow candle, as there was no other means of lighting the house. Elder Kies took up his hat and went out upon the street, stepping upon the foot path by the roadside, he stopped—looked with amazement, rubbed his eyes, and looked again—the streets were filled. Over the hills from the village, down the hills from the mountain, over the cross-road from Pork Lane, across the lots from the surrounding farms, people were coming, in wagons, on horseback, and on foot, each with the prescribed candle, pouring into the little school house filling it to overflowing, mounting upon the window ledges, crowding into the entry, blocking up all the standing room and filling every space within and for a distance around the school house.

Elder Kies arose in the desk and read a hymn, well-known then, entitled: "A Sound of a Going in the Tops of the Mulberry Trees," commencing:

"What joyful sound is this I hear,  
Fresh from the mulberry tops?  
Ye saints give ear, the Lord draws near,  
Your drooping heads lift up.  
Hark! Hear the sound—it moves around,  
How sweet the accents are.  
My joys abound. *I know* the sound;  
It is the voice of prayer."

His lesson was one of David's psalms, and his text "How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him; but if Baal, then follow him." The words flowed from his lips in a torrent of eloquence that

so affected the people as to interrupt the speaker from time to time, by shouts and groans and lamentations, and this meeting at the "West Neighborhood" was never forgotten.

The impressions of Elder Leland were something remarkable before the commencement of these meetings. He says, a heavenly visitor came, one day, to his house with salutations of peace. When sitting in his room alone it seemed to be whitewashed with love, when straying abroad through his fields, in the shadow of those steep hills, a circle of light seemed to surround him, and resting at eventime, sitting by his door sill (this house is at present occupied by Mr. George Carpenter just as it was then) the words came again, and again, and still again, "The Lord will work," as though injected into his mind.

He started early in the fall on a tour to Virginia preaching and performing the work of an evangelist. A throng of people followed him for a number of miles listening to his words, and bidding him at last tearful good-byes. Appointments were made for a long distance ahead, but becoming more and more impressed regarding the people he had left behind he finally cancelled his engagements and returned, declaring that he could not preach to Virginia with the sins of Cheshire on his back. He reached the residence of Deacon Wood at midnight, and awakened them from deep sleep by singing in his sweet thrilling voice :

" Brethren, I have come again,  
Joseph lives, and Jesus reigns,  
Praise Him in the loudest strains."

They arose and admitted him, and from that day the work went on. Long years after when Mrs. Wood was an old lady to her children's children she often told the story of the old time hymn as it sounded from out the fall night, breaking their slumbers and proclaiming the arrival of their beloved friend and teacher.

In every era and among every people since the race began we find men who leave the impress of their character on all associated with them. Men born to rule their fellows, and to mould the thoughts and opinions of state and nation. Such a man was Elder Leland ; not only in the sparsely settled districts of old Virginia where his influence was sought when a great measure was before the people, but also among the sturdy farmers of this little village, his political views were heartily and unanimously endorsed. A strong Jeffersonian himself, the whole people were admirers of Jefferson also. When he was chosen to fill the Presidential chair their exultation knew no bounds, and impelled by a desire to pay him some tribute of respect, the original thought occurred to them that from so famous a dairying community what could be more appropriate than a mam-

moth cheese, the result of their united contributions. In investigating the history of the manufacture of this cheese we find a diversity of opinion as to the place of making, some of the older people claiming that the curd was mixed at Elisha Brown's, on the farm now occupied by William Bennet, and there pressed, then brought down to Captain Daniel Brown's to be cured and dried. In support of this theory we copy from the Hampshire Gazette of September 10th, 1801, the following quaint account of its making and journey :

"And Jacknips said unto the Cheshireites behold the Lord hath put in a ruler over us that is after our own hearts. Now let us gather together our curd, and carry it into the valley of Elisha unto his wine press, and there make a great cheese, that we may make a thank offering unto that great man. Now these sayings pleased the Cheshireites, so they did as Jacknips had commanded. And they said unto Darius, the son of Daniel, the prophet, make us a great hoop, four feet in diameter, and eighteen inches high, and Darius did as he was commanded, and Asahel and Benjamin, the blacksmiths, secured it with strong iron bands, so that it could not give way. Now the time for making the great cheese was on the 20th day of the seventh month, when all the Jacobites assembled as one man, every man with his curd except John, the physician, who said: 'I have no curd but I will doctor the Federalists, send them to me and I will cure their fedism,' but Jacknips said: 'Behold Frances, the wife of John the Millite, she is a goodly woman and she is wont to make good cheese, now she shall be chief among women.' Now, when all these things were ready, they put it in Elisha's press—ten days did they press it; but on the eleventh, Jacknips said unto the Cheshireites 'Behold, now let us gather together a great multitude and move it to the great house of Daniel, the prophet, there to be cured and dried.' Now Daniel lives about eight furlongs from the valley of Elisha. So they made a great parade and mounted the cheese on a sled and put six horses to draw it. And Jacknips went forward, and when he came to the inn of Little Moses he said unto Moses 'Behold, the great cheese is coming.' And Moses said unto Freelove his wife, 'Behold the multitude advancing, now let us kill all the first born of the lambs and he goats and make a great feast.' And they did so, and the people did eat meat and drink wine, the fourth part of a hin each, so they were very merry. And Jacknips said: 'It shall come to pass when your children shall say unto you, what mean you by this great cheese?' Ye shall answer them saying: 'It is a sacrifice unto our great ruler, because he giveth gifts unto the Jacobites and taketh them from the Federalists.' And Jacknips said: 'Peradventure within two years I shall present this great cheese as a thank offering unto our great ruler,' and all the Cheshireites shall say 'Amen.'"

Others claim that it was brought to Daniel Brown's in the beginning, and we incline to this statement from the fact that Mr. Edmund Foster (grandson of Captain Brown) and others of equally good authority are positive that such was the case. Each good wife set her milk in her own dairy and on the appointed day brought the curds, and there were mixed and salted by the most skillful dairy women. It was pressed in the cider-mill, and one month from the day of its making it weighed 1,235 pounds. From the fact that at a later period a larger cheese was made in the same town

weighing about 1,400 pounds, doubtless arises the conflicting statement. In the early fall the cheese was carefully packed and in the care and escort of Elder Leland and Darius Brown, it was drawn to Hudson and from there shipped by water to Washington. Through the kindness of Mr. Daniel B. Brown (son of Darius), we are able to give the presentation speech, and Jefferson's reply, from the original documents. The latter bearing the signature traced by the hand that penned the Declaration of Independence, and struck slavery from the north western territory.

*To Thomas Jefferson, President of the United States of America :—*

SIR :—Notwithstanding we live remote from the seat of our national government in an extreme part of our own state, yet we humbly claim the right of judging for ourselves. Our attachment to the national constitution is indissoluble. We consider it as a definition of those powers which the people have delegated to their magistrates to be exercised for definite purposes, and not as a charter of favors granted by a sovereign to his subjects. Among its beautiful features the right of free suffrage, to correct all abuses, the prohibition of religious tests to prevent all hierarchy, and the means of amendment which it contains within itself to remove defects as fast as they are discovered, appear the most prominent. Such being the sentiments which we entertain our joy must have been exquisite on your appointment to the first office in the nation. The trust is great. The task is arduous. But we believe the Supreme Ruler of the Universe, who raises up men to achieve great events, has raised up a *Jefferson* at this critical day to defend Republicanism, and to baffle the arts of aristocracy. We wish to prove the love we bear to our President, not by words alone but in *deed and in truth*. With this address we send you a cheese, by the hands of Messrs. John Leland and Darius Brown, as a token of the esteem which we bear to our Chief Magistrate, and of the sense we entertain of the singular blessings that have been derived from the numerous services you have rendered mankind in general, and more especially to this favored nation over which you preside. It is not the last stone of the Bastille, nor is it an article of great pecuniary worth, but as a free will offering, we hope it will be favorably received. The cheese was procured by the personal labor of *freeborn farmers* with the voluntary and cheerful aid of their wives and daughters, without the assistance of a single slave. It was originally intended for an elective President of a free people and with a principal view of casting a mite into the even scale of Federal Democracy. We hope it will safely arrive at its destined place, and that its quality will prove to be such as may not disappoint the wishes of those who made it. To that Infinite Being who governs the Universe we ardently pray that your life and health may long be preserved, that your usefulness may be still continued, that your administration may be no less pleasant to yourself than it is grateful to us and to the nation at large, and that the blessings of generations yet unborn may come upon you. In behalf of ourselves, and our fellow citizens of Cheshire, we render you the tribute of profound respect.

Jefferson's reply:

*To Messrs Daniel Brown, Hezekiah Mason, Jonathan Richardson, John Waterman and John Wells, Jun., a committee of the town of Cheshire, in Massachusetts.*

I concur with you in the sentiments expressed in your kind address on behalf of the inhabitants of the town of Cheshire, that the Constitution of the United States is a charter of authorities and duties, not a charter of rights to its officers, and that

among its most precious provisions are the right of suffrage, the prohibition of religious tests, and its means of peaceable amendment. Nothing ensures the duration of this fair fabric of government so effectually as the due sense entertained by the body of our citizens of the value of these principles and their care to preserve them. I receive with particular pleasure the testimony of good will with which your citizens have been pleased to charge you. It presents an extraordinary proof of the skill with which those domestic arts which contribute so much to our daily comfort, are practiced by them, and particularly by that portion of them most interesting to the affections, the cares and the happiness of man. To myself, this mark of esteem from free born farmers, employed personally in the useful labors of life, is peculiarly grateful, having no wish but to preserve to them the fruits of their labor, their sense of this truth will be my highest reward. I pray you gentlemen to make my thanks for their favor acceptable to them, and to be assured yourselves of my highest respect and esteem.

THOMAS JEFFERSON.

In 1803 vaccination was introduced into the town and the dreadful ordeal of being inoculated for the small-pox was abandoned. Jenner had triumphed over an avalanche of difficulties, and the world began to enjoy the blessings of his discovery, the greatest of the century.

In 1804 Elder Nathan Mason ordained Elder Joseph Cornell of Cheshire, who labored in the ministry forty-six years. This man was a strong advocate for an educated clergy, although so illiterate at the time of his own ordination that he could scarcely read the simplest sentence. By hard study he overcame this and acquired a fair education. He died at eighty while acting as missionary in western New York. John Vincent, also of Cheshire, was ordained by Elder Leland at a later date. He figured in the church during these years and leaves a journal history of it which contains much desirable information. Unlike elder Cornell he did not advocate an educated ministry. Most literally did he interpret the promise "The Lord will provide," and believed that whomsoever the Lord called to preach His word, to him words would be given. He was an ardent admirer, almost a worshiper, of Elder Leland, whom he adopted for a pattern in all things.

In 1804 Elder Nathan Mason died, revered and beloved by all, at the advanced age of 80 years. He died at Fort Ann, Washington County, New York, surrounded by friends. He left a family of children and his descendants are scattered through the United States, but few being left in Cheshire.

In 1804 Timothy Mason was keeping tavern on Stafford's Hill, on the spot where Mr. Frank Prince now resides. In the paper of this (1803) day two farms are advertised to be sold from this tavern. They are situated one-half mile south of the meeting house, have all conveniences, have a dairy, cheese, milk and press house, two dwelling houses, good barns, corn houses, and two good fruit orchards that yield abundant fruit. Two aqueducts carry a plentiful supply of water to houses and barns, while a quan-

tity of wood is found in the belt of timbered land that crosses the farm. All showing under what a state of cultivation this section of the town was at the commencement of the century.

Hunting parties were formed at this hotel on the hill, and Cheshire gentlemen fond of the sport gathered here and followed the chase, starting the fox from his lair in the shade of the lone mountains and pursuing him with hound and horse. June 25th, 1804, the lovers of this pleasure joined in a hunting match and sweeping over the hills and through the woods killed 164 woodchucks, 85 squirrels, 41 chipmunks, 1 hawk and myriads of birds.

In 1805 Mrs. Peter Werden died at 80 years. Tradition says she was buried by the side of her husband, on the slope of Stafford's Hill. There is traceable a grave, sunken and covered with wild flowers: golden rod grows rank above it, the blue-eyed genetian lifts its fringed cup in the grasses, but there is no stone to tell to whom it belonged.

Elder Leland was willing to preach, pray and baptize among the people, but positively refused to break bread for his church. This position gave rise to much and varied discussion among the members of the church, a church to which they all, with Elder Leland himself, had pledged allegiance, one that required its members, on admission, to partake of the symbols Christ had chosen and blessed, when he said to his disciples, "Do this 'till I come." They held it as a sacred legacy and were not quite willing to allow any of their members to say: "I do not enjoy the communion service. It never assisted me to behold the body and blood of my Saviour, therefore, I am justified in not attending church meetings and not appearing at the Lord's table." Their discipline had been strong. Many a lay member had been summoned to the tribunals of the church and summarily dealt with for this very same thing.

Dr. Francis Gitteau, an eminent physician of New Framingham who belonged to the church acted upon this principle to show its fallacy. He argued that if such a course was followed it would bring all churches to grief; but if it was right for Elder Leland it was right for Dr. Gitteau.

Perhaps it's not necessary to say that Dr. Gitteau was ex-communicated while Elder Leland was sustained.

In 1804, he removed to Dutchess County leaving Elder Jones (a native of Cheshire) as pastor of the Third church. Here he remained for two years, returning to Cheshire in 1806, a few days before the total eclipse of the sun.

About this time Elder Lemuel Covell appeared at Cheshire and occupied the pulpit. His youth, eloquence and pleasing manners won the hearts of the people at once, and a committee was appointed to confer with him, and secure him if possible as their pastor.

With a large family and a small salary, Elder Covell, like many another

preacher of those days, found himself in debt prior to his engagement with the church at Pittstown, where he was located at this time. The Pittstown church had paid the \$700 against him on condition that he would never leave them to become pastor of any other church until that church first refunded the amount due to them. Elder Covell was therefore pledged to them, and although strongly inclined to accept the enthusiastic call of Cheshire, he frankly told them of his financial embarrassment, and why he could not consider the call.

A church meeting was called without delay. The committee reported the statement made to them, but captivated with the man they strongly advised the payment of the debt to the Pittstown people.

Cooler members of the church, among whom were many of good judgment, and much wealth strongly argued that it would be unwise for them to assume such a burden, said that it would be with the utmost difficulty that they could pay the \$700 in addition to the yearly salary and running expenses of the church.

But this committee, led by Hezekiah Mason, were men of spirit and indomitable will and determined to carry the point in which their wishes were so thoroughly involved.

"Why," said Hezekiah Mason, "I'd rather pay the whole thing myself than to give up Covell." So although they in no wise convinced the different brothers they conquered. Elder Covell's debts were paid, or contracted to be paid, and he was installed over the Third church of Cheshire at \$170 per year, on the same conditions given to the Pittstown church with one additional item, namely, if his family failed to receive a proper support he could remove without refunding the \$700.

So it was in 1806, we find this minister located with his family in a house remodelled from the old Six Principle church, standing on Pork Lane and known as the Perry Beers barn in later years.

Elder Leland and Covell were strong friends. The former doing the work of an evangelist, and to use his own words, "Improving! whenever opportunity offered" and the latter performing the pastoral duties.

But Alas! "The best laid plans of man gae aft aglae," and in about six months after this compact was entered upon, Elder Covell was stricken down in his early manhood, his work was done, and death sealed him for his own.

The Cheshire church was now left with the \$700 and a large family on their hands while he that they depended upon was powerless to help them. The party who had opposed the hiring of Covell stood back refusing to pay any share of the indebtedness and suggesting that brother Hezekiah Mason could fulfill the promise made at random.



That class that represented Elder Covell's interests sought Elder Leland at this juncture hoping much from him as he was an earnest friend of the dead minister. He, however, gave them but little sympathy hinting that had they yielded some of their will in the beginning they might have spared much trouble for all. This did not serve to mollify the dissatisfied members, and for a space of two years no church meetings were held and the bitterness grew and rankled.

"In 1806, Elder John Francis was ordained at Pittsfield in Mr. Allen's meeting house. Prayer was offered by Elder Covell of Cheshire. Right hand of fellowship given by Elder John Leland who delivered an earnest, pathetic discourse highly pleasing to the audience, many of whom had never witnessed the ingenuity and talents of this gifted man."—*Pittsfield Sun*, June 14, 1806.

In 1806, Thompson S. Skinner was treasurer for the Commonwealth of Mass., acting then for the second term. On his paper as third bondsman was the name of Capt. Daniel Brown. During this term Skinner was defaulter to the State for \$20,000, (twenty thousand dollars.)

This fact when brought to light caused the wildest tumult in the air. Some of the bondsmen forgot to be honest. Some were placed on the limits the authorities fearing that they might be tempted.

Captain Brown lost heavily in this transaction. The beautiful lot where now stands the residence of Mrs. Werden Brown was sold to Cole Brothers to raise the necessary money for the honest man to meet his word; also a lot known at that time as the twenty acre lot, owned now by J. B. Dean, Dr. Cole and others. Beside the loss of these valuable lands outright the Captain paid all the money, left him from a generous living, that his income yielded to meet the demand until a few years before his death when he made the final payment.

In this decade Dr. Mason Brown was practicing medicine in the new village of Cheshire, and its surrounding country occupying an office on the green. This Dr. Brown was a son of Caleb Brown and native to the euphonious street Pork Lane, of which it is claimed that none other can show so proud a record, or number so many noble men and women reared from childhood on the farms along its borders. Among these are Russel, Caleb and Manning Brown well known as manufacturers. Arnold Mason who was a very successful public contractor, and one of three who built the High Bridge at Harlem, N. Y. Levi Mason who, dying at less than middle life, left what was then a fine property amassed by himself and many more that might be mentioned.

Dr. Brown spent the summers for many years of his later life at Saratoga where it is said that he won many friends and quite a lucrative practice. He read medicine with Dr. Tanner of Williamstown and never graduated at a medical school. The store on the hill so long occupied by the Coles,

was built in 1808 by Calvin Hall who also built and kept tavern in the house now owned by C. C. Cole. Some can remember the square bar in the south room, with its high, picketed gate, and can recall the ancient characters on the wall of the room above, occupied once by a society of Free and Accepted Masons. Stealing in to the darkened gloomy room at sunset, when the shadows lay long across the chamber floor, looking at the strange hieroglyphics in the light of the Morgan excitement, listening to the whispered hobgoblin stories of the midnight ride in a closed carriage to the Niagara frontier what wonder that they made a lasting impression upon a childish mind, much like a glance at Plutonian shores, and that a Mason was looked upon as a veritable ogre until the years brought a more intelligent understanding.

When Calvin Hall was about completing this house and store he placed a tall sign-post in front much to the annoyance of Moses Wolcott keeping tavern down under the hill, so he went at once, and replaced his own with a pole fifty feet high, that any one rising the hill beyond Hall's hotel would see the Wolcott sign fluttering from below.

One morning about this time Dr. Brown walking down the street met Mr. Wolcott, and said after the usual salutations:

"Well, neighbor Wolcott, we thought we would put up a tavern on the hill then we could boast of two in town."

"Yes, yes," said the somewhat touchy old man, "We thought we would have a new doctor down the hill here, then we could boast of *one* in town."

In good preservation is a Masonic apron and certificate of entrance to the Lodge on Stafford's Hill made out to Daniel Brown and bearing date:

"Ye Franklin Masonic Lodge, in ye 12th day of November, salvation 1795 ; or 5795 of Masonry.

Signed : { Tom<sup>as</sup> Remington, Peleg Green,  
Perley Phillips, Robert Walker.

This Lodge received its charter in 1794, and in June 1800, permission was gained from the Grand Lodge for it to hold its meetings alternately in Cheshire and Lanesborough, three months at each place.

John Bennet, who is the ancestor of the Bennet family now known in Cheshire, and who afterward bought the farm first taken up by John Wells, and the one adjoining, where William P. Bennet now lives came to Berkshire during this era, and worked for Captain Daniel Brown upon the farm just below the one that he purchased eventually.

A Tything man was employed by the town and his duty was to keep close watch, detect all wrong doing, and make crooked ways straight as far as possible. The boys were fond of a game of ball in those days, and young Bennet habitually kept tally for them as they played. It chanced that on one warm Sunday afternoon they all went out to the vicinity of the Whit-

ford Rocks for a game, and unfortunately for them Bowen happened to be passing by. He arrested every player and fined them twenty shillings a head. Bennet paid his fine as well as the rest, but inwardly resolved on revenge. A few weeks later he went to Stafford's Hill on a Sunday morning to Elder Werden's meeting, and noticing Bowen drive up and fasten his horse under the shed he concluded the hour had arrived for him to pay up the grudge that had rankled in his breast like a thorn.

When the services were well begun, and the voice of the minister in his sermon reached the ear through the open door, Bennet commenced to shear the horse that Bowen had left under the shed in fancied security. One side was well done, the flowing mane and long tail were clipped short when he was warned by the singing of the hymn that his work was ended, and beating a hasty retreat he left the animal in his unique plight to tell the tale to his master as best he could.

James Fisk, father of James Fisk of Erie fame was born in this town, his father lived on Pork Lane, he had a large family and was exceedingly poor. He was an inveterate talker, and for this propensity some wag gave him the name of "Conquiddle Fisk." The Conquiddle was a bird, a native of the wild woods that kept up, from morn till night, from earliest spring until the last fall days, a continual, never ceasing chipper, piping his cheery notes as harbinger of the summer weather, twittering amid the dreary blasts of November, always heard above the songs of other birds, and often seen hopping from branch to branch of the sombre trees.

Circumstances were not favorable to "Conquiddle Fisk," and when he found himself steeped in irremediable poverty he left his wife and children Samuel, John, and Eli, Mary, Sue, and James, and the baby in their little cabin on Pork Lane, and was never heard of after.

The children were bid off as paupers to the highest bidder, and taken by Russel Brown to the factory grounds in Adams (south village.) There James Fisk, Jr., grew up and as he was not exactly the material of which paupers are made he commenced a mereantile life in the way of peddling. He made his home somewhere in the vicinity of Pownal where his illustrious son was born.

James Fisk the third succeeded his father in the business of peddling when quite young, then they united their fortunes and drove, all up and down the valley road, a fine establishment which was well known and largely patronized at every village as well as at many a farm house. In this commodious wagon was stowed everything in the dry goods line and jewelry, from a darning needle to heavy silks and velvets, from a gold button to fine watches and silver plate. When the elder gentleman was under the cloud, when pay was slow, and duns were plenty, Jim Fisk

the younger took the reins and owned the establishment and "vice versa." Driving through the by-ways of New England, along the country lanes and village streets, halting at farm house and way side cottage, young Jim, endowed by nature with a keen observation, desirous of pleasing people and thus securing them for his customers, learned to read character with adroitness a knowledge that without doubt served him well when he entered upon a broader field of action, and engaged in that successful business life which ended so disastrously at last.

The practice of selling children by the town authorities to whomsoever chose to buy them seems to have been a very prevalent one. The records of such sales are often seen upon the pages of the books.

Job Seaman was bought at the brick school house by Manning Brown, and taken to the factory grounds at South Adams as was Fisk; but Job ran away and evaded the search made for him.

## CHAPTER V.

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FROM 1807—1817.

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FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH. PROGRESS OF NEW PROVIDENCE AND THE FOUR CORNERS. CHESHIRE CROWN GLASS COMPANY. ALDEN POTTER'S INVENTIONS AND MANUFACTURES. POST RIDERS. POST OFFICES. DISAFFECTION IN THIRD CHESHIRE CHURCH. JONATHAN RICHARDSON. WAR OF 1812. RESOLUTIONS PASSED BY TOWN. BRITISH OFFICERS. EDMOND FOSTER.

As surely as we could trace the snowflake to the cloud from whence it falls, so surely could be traced the reason why villages are builded upon the spots selected did one know just how to follow the chain of circumstances leading to the selection. A valid reason also exists why they grow, prosper, and finally decline and perish. Health and safety were, doubtless the articles most required by our early pioneers. The continuous hills, about which our Hoosac river curls and loops and winds, furnished the former article, and union gave the latter—hence the hill-tops and the little settlements.

In 1807, there is Stafford's Hill, Cheshire Corners, Pork Lane, Scrabble-town, The Kitchen, Thunder and Federal City, this last is now known as Pumpkin Hook. It took its first name, tradition says, because the only Federals in town—three in number—lived there in houses that stood in a row. At this period there were more houses and more business at the Hill than at Cheshire or Adams.

In 1808 Elder Werden dying, Elder Bartimus Braman became pastor of the church where he officiated until 1815.

November 5th, 1808, at a church meeting held at the school house on Stafford's Hill, the church voted to procure a grave stone for Elder Werden and pay the expenses equally among the brethren.

April 30th, 1808, Daniel Bowen and Deacon Carpenter appointed to attend Shaftsbury Association.

December 3d, 1808, to Brother Daniel Bowen a letter given to improve his gift in doctrine, prayer and exhortation as the Lord shall direct. In the church letter to Pownal (1808), this afflicted people write:

"Divine Providence hath taken away our venerable and aged father in the gospel, Elder Peter Werden, from off this post of Zion's Wall. He hath taken his flight from the church militant to the church triumphant, and we are left destitute of an under shepherd to lead us into the green pastures of the gospel. Pray, brethren, that the Lord of the harvest will send us one after his own heart to lead us into the mysteries of His Blessed Word."

June 3d, 1809, a letter to the Shaftsbury Association, signed Bartimus Branan, asks "If it is the duty of the Church of Christ to commune with churches incorporated by law to screen them from paying taxes to the support of the standing order of this state." This subject was beginning to be a vexed one, and ended after much strife, in the ministerial tax being abolished.

June 3d, 1809, William Rogers was dealt with for not attending church meeting. Found him in a comfortable frame of mind, but cannot attend said meetings as he is working by the month at Springfield. Brother Rogers is forgiven.

August 1st, 1810, Sister Deacon Carpenter dealt with for the same transgression. Church votes to be forbearing with Sister Carpenter if she will try to attend the means of grace in future.

October 17th, 1812, Brother Charles Walker is troubled in the feelings of his mind in consequence of music in the church. The brothers and sisters vote, however, that singing is part of the solemn worship of God if performed by the saints.

October 14th, 1815, Rev. Samuel Bloss takes pastoral care of the church, and establishes a school destined to become one of considerable note. A school where at different times appear as pupils Elnathan Sweet, Samuel Savory, Ezekiel Skinner, Noah G. Bushnell, Elias Whipple, and others. Young ladies, too, had a department here, and those from a distance found homes and board at the surrounding farm houses.

In 1810 there were twelve good, comfortable houses clustered on the top of this hill. They were well cared for, hedged around with shubbery and adorned with flowers, while at Cheshire Corners there were only nine. As this may be a matter of interest to future seekers of antiquarian lore I will name them: The residence of Captain Brown, built in 1797; the hotel of Moses Wolcott, in 1795; Calvin Hall's, on the hill, 1808; the home of Squire Barker, where Mrs. Noble K. Wolcott now resides; the house long owned by Sally Heath: the old Hinman place, opposite Captain Brown's; the old gambrel roofed house at the point of the roads; one standing near the old burying ground and one upon the site of Mrs. George Slade's, comprised the village of Cheshire, besides its church and brick school house in 1810.

On Stafford's Hill at this time Jacob Baker carried on a cabinet shop.

The wayside forge kept four fires burning, and made hoes, scythes and all farming implements. Daniel Remington had the reputation of making the finest shoe of any one in the country. A wagon maker's shop was running, and two flourishing stores were in full operation. People, taken up with useful things, and tired of traveling to Pontoosuc for every grist they had ground, utilized the water power at Federal City, and besides the saw-mill erected by Eric Hosford had put in a "run of stone," and so ground their corn nearer home.

At the sand-mill, close by William Jacques', William Colson made broad-cloth by hand and sent it to Adams to be dressed. Still preserved are pretty fabrics of woolen dress material carded, spun, dyed and woven by Mrs. David Cole, with her own wheel and in her own loom. Streams were bridged by planks, lashed together upon beams at the public expense.

In 1810, Aldrich's mill was put up at Cheshire Harbor. At The Kitchen were two tanneries, one run by a Mr. Clapp, and one by Joshua Mason, son of James Mason, an early settler, who left a large family. The vats were out of doors, skins were tanned in suitable weather, the vats closed and business suspended when the inclemency of the season demanded.

In 1816, David and Ebenezer Cole bought the store and hotel of Calvin Hall on the hill.

In 1812, The Cheshire Crown Glass company was incorporated. Its organizers being Calvin Hall, John D. Leland, Darins Brown and John Hunt of Stockbridge. Their buildings were erected just across the brook from the present sand works. They brought the sand from Lanesborough. Whether too far to draw the raw material, or whether the firm was unsuccessful is not known, for some cause it ran a short race and in 1816 went down, possibly it was affected by the embargo.

In 1814 we find a receipt of money paid to twenty-five Hessian soldiers for chopping wood.

In 1815 is a charge for a quart of rum at a store hard by, which beside two or three old windows of the style known as "bull's eye," that grace a garret now and then, and two of the old tenement houses standing on Wrangle Row, nothing is left to tell of the old Crown Glass company.

Also in 1812, Asahel Potter had a trip-hammer at Scrabble Town and made scythes, hoes and farming tools. Alden Potter was the first one in western Massachusetts to manufacture cotton machinery, for spinning in an old red shop opposite the dam at Scrabletown. Alden Potter had learned his trade of Slater in Rhode Island and while at work perfecting these spinning jennies there was one point where he did not succeed and was baffled every time. Thinking that if he could watch some of the running of the machinery in the mill where he had learned his trade he would be

able to see where he failed and correct it, he took his father's horse and went on horseback to Slater's mills in Rhode Island, where he slyly watched and learned his point. He then returned perfected his own invention, and his spinning jennies were put into the twenty-first cotton factory in the country. The gearings were all made of brass, the cast iron being too hard. Again Alden Potter went to New York city where he invented a machine by which he could take cotton, and running it through the machine, bring it out cloth complete. He had just succeeded in getting his model ready and put up when the cholera panic broke out and he immediately left the city to accompany his wife and daughter up the river to Newburg, where her father lived. On his arrival there he remembered, what in his first feeling of fright had not occurred to his mind that some ingenious machinist might see his model all set up and steal his invention, so he returned to the city and the mill, took the model all apart and scattered it about the room. The day after his arrival at Newburg the second time, he was taken ill with cholera and died, so the invention, for which he had labored was lost for that time and for him.

Although the improvement of the country from the peace of Paris, 1783, to 1812, was steady and sure it seems to have been slow in the opinion of the fast competitive American who does in a week what his fathers occupied a year in performing. It seems strange that public conveyances were not established. The mails were still carried by post riders, and in the files of the Pittsfield Sun letters were advertised for Cheshire people as remaining in the Pittsfield post-office for the past ten years of the century.

In 1800 the Pittsfield Sun was founded, coming in with the century. Through all its years it has stood firmly by its democratic principles. So heartily was it endorsed, so thoroughly sustained by the Cheshire people that one of its three Federals, in a fit of pique gave it the name of "Cheshire's Bible." So intimately was it and its founder known and read in the home circles that it some instances little children confounding the words *Phineas* and *Finis* supposed for years that all their books were signed by Phineas Allen. When the Sun came to be so generally taken a postal carrier was employed at two shillings per quarter, who visited the different neighborhoods, leaving the papers at some place chosen for the purpose. For years the Cheshire mail was brought by one Jimmie Green, in a pair of saddle-bags from Pittsfield. Sometimes Jimmie came on foot, sometimes astride a gray pony. We are sure that he realized the importance of the trust committed to his charge from the fact that as he trudged along or rode the pony over the hills and along the newly laid out highways, he duly appreciated the danger of being way-laid, robbed and murdered while on his mission and with native New England forethought, wishing to be



prepared for the direst emergency carried, carefully folded away in his hat, his shroud. Poor Jimmie Green he has worn his shroud for many a year, but he never fell a victim to a mail robbery.

In 1810 the first post-office, of which any record appears, was opened at the store of Calvin Hall, with John D. Leland as postmaster. The oldest inhabitant knows of none prior to this date. According to the Postmaster-General's report if any existed earlier the fire at Washington destroyed the record of it. The charges established by the Provincial Congress were still in force. For a letter not exceeding sixty miles postage was 5 pence and 1 farthing.

In the Cheshire Third church the disaffection continued to increase. The debt of Elder Covell, pledged to the Pittstown church in yearly installments, must be paid, the wife and family of Elder Covell was still in their midst with but little or no means of support after the husband and father was snatched from his early labors, all of which made the members of the Third church heavy burden bearers, even though they unitedly put their shoulders to the wheel; but the majority inclined to the opinion that those by whose advice the burdens had been incurred should meet them. These things, together with the sustaining of Elder Leland in his peculiar tenets which virtually deprived them of a pastor, were the bones of contention.

In 1810, the church met and appointed a committee to attend to the collecting of the money from Hezekiah Mason, and his colleagues for paying the debt of Elder Covell.

Rebelling under the loss of property, and smarting at what appeared to them the injustice of looking to Hezekiah Mason for the debt of the church, they resolved to apply to Elder Leland for a statement of his views of church order and discipline, and sent the following request to him, signed by "Ten Aggrieved brethren."

"Dear and beloved Elder and Father in the gospel. Necessity urges us to communicate our minds to you as friends and brethren. We pray the Lord to direct us to do it in a suitable becoming manner while we have some sense of our imperfections.

While you served us in the ministry your gift was almost universally edifying and comforting to us, it evidently appeared that the Lord owned and blessed your labours for the good of souls, and the up building and edifying of the church. Since that we think we have some reason of grief, for a long time you have neglected attending the appointments of the church and acting your part as a brother. We not only feel the want of your assistance but the effect that your example hath on others encouraging them to neglect acting their part with us as brothers. Now dear brother we earnestly request that you will convince us that we are in error, or give us satisfaction for these things so that we may enjoy fellowship together which is the earnest wish and desire of your brethren."

Signed: { NATHANIEL BLISS, JONATHAN RICHARDSON, ZULPHIA WHIPPLE,  
JAMES COLE, EDDY MASON, SUSANNA BLISS, TEMPERANCE WHIPPLE,  
BROOKS MASON, ISRAEL COLE, JR., ESTHER RICHARDSON.

In reply to this request of a portion of his church, Elder Leland appointed a church meeting for the 22d of August 1811, where he appeared and made the following statement of his reasons, saying :

1st. I have no doubt about the necessity of internal religion, nor of the great advantage of social worship, to preach, pray, and praise.

2d. Some doubts have ever been in my mind, whether the advantage of what is called *church order*, more than compensates for the disadvantages. It is uppermost in my mind, however, that good church order is scriptural.

3d. I lodge no complaint against communing with bread and wine ; but for myself for more than thirty years experiment I have had no evidence that the bread and wine ever assisted my faith to discern the Lord's Body. I have never felt guilty for not communing ; but often for doing it. I have known no instance that God evidently blessed the ordinance for the conversion of sinners which often attends preaching praying, singing, and baptizing.

4th. Putting all together the best conclusion that I can form is that church labor and breaking bread is what the Lord does not place on me any more than he did baptizing on Paul.

5th. If the church can bear with me while I possess these feelings, and let me do what I have faith and confidence in (which will be but a little while, for there is nothing left but a stump,) I shall be glad. Whenever I think I can do good, or get good I will attend church meeting, and whenever the doubts of my mind are removed I will commune.

6th. If the church cannot bear thus with me, I wish them to give me a letter of dismission—such a letter as they can.

7th. If such a letter cannot be given to me consistently with the order and dignity of the church, I suppose ex-communication must follow of course."

JOHN LELAND.

The above statement was put in writing, and in addition to it Elder Leland stated verbally that he did not know of any rule in the Bible for the church to walk by if they undertook to attend to discipline. There was so much deception and craft made use of that it was almost impossible for right to take place, it often served to crush truth and cherish vice.

During the meeting a resolution was offered and voted upon that nothing but immorality should demand the withdrawal of the fellowship of the Third church from its members, which was quite an innovation as prior to this, quarrelling, staying from church meetings, from communion, and various misdemeanors had been considered, and acted upon by these strict disciplinarians as ample cause for dismissal from the church.

November, 1811, the "Ten Aggrieved Brethren," sent in the following protest:

"Against the requests granted at our last church meeting we feel to make the following statement which is our grief:

1st. In granting a member liberty to attend or not to attend the appointments of the church which renders the covenant relation we stand in towards each other to be the feelings of the creature instead of subjecting ourselves to Christ and his laws.

And in holding an administrator in fellowship who baptizes candidates without requesting the fellowship of the church of which he is a member.

Also a vote passed at the church meeting last, that the hand of fellowship shall not be withdrawn from any member excepting for immorality.

DANIEL COMAN,	BROOKS MASON,
EDDY MASON,	JONATHAN RICHARDSON.
WILLIAM COLSON, JR.,	JAMES COLE.

CHESHIRE, November 21st, 1811."

In addition to this protest and accompanying it as it was folded and filed away is the following :

"We think that the statement made by Elder Leland, Aug. 22, 1811, which he called a compendium of his feelings is a very suitable description of his practice for ten years, which we think has been a great means to hinder and discourage the visibility of the church, if the advantages of what is called church order do not more than compensate for the disadvantages; are not Christians very unwise to attempt to form in social religious compact?"

During the winter of 1811, Elder Leland was sent to the Legislature in Boston from Cheshire where he labored untiringly in the opposition against ecclesiastical oppression. Two delegates to general court were sent from the town in the winter of 1811—Elder Leland and Daniel Brown.

During the absence of the minister quite an extensive revival broke out; but after his return the warfare in the church waxed stronger.

In March, 1812, a council was called in which the "Aggrieved Brethren," who were now arrayed against the church proper, appeared hoping to arrive at some understanding, but it was ignored by Elder Leland and his followers.

May 16, 1812, still another meeting was appointed with the same results.

In July, 1812, the Shaftsbury Association meeting at Stockbridge received two letters, each purporting to be from the Cheshire Third church, Dea. Jonathan Richardson appearing for the "Aggrieved Brethren," and bearing their letter, Dea. Daniel Coman for the church that supported Elder Leland.

Jonathan Richardson with the natural nobility of his nature, saw and felt keenly the unpleasant condition of things, and regretted exceedingly the step taken by addressing the association in the name of the Third Cheshire church, and although believing this party to be justified in their grievances he expressed his regret to the church for the unadvised and hasty move in addressing the Shaftsbury association. The latter body made an effort to reconcile the contending parties; but with no satisfactory results.

In 1817 the Third Church withdrew from the Shaftsbury Association, which, according to the authoress of the "Life of Leland," was unfriendly

to him, and went on alone. An independent church, Elder Leland preaching to them, at intervals; now and then some neighboring pastor would come over to administer the communion service, and part of the time the doors were closed and the pews unoccupied. As an old chronicler has it:

“The church enjoyed a calm repose.”

Among the noble men whose names brighten the pages of this local history, and to whom it has never done full justice, is that of Jonathan Richardson. He aimed to consecrate all things to the greater glory of God, and for this labored with a grand simplicity, and a pious effort. Once upon a time a poor woman was left a widow, a family of small children was to be supported, and many debts to be paid. Working hard to bring these ends about, she gathered together at last eighty dollars due to Jonathan Richardson, and sent a little son with it one cold, blustering day in the late fall, with orders to give it to Mr. Richardson and take his receipt for the same. This the boy did and it was all arranged satisfactorily. The next morning while the widow was building her morning fire there came a rap at the kitchen door and upon opening it Mr. Richardson stood on the flat door stone. “I have been thinking,” said he, “That it’s hard times, with a cold winter coming on, and you have a good many mouths to feed, and it must be pretty hard work to make all things come out straight with the year, and I’ve concluded that it is far easier for me to do without this money than it is for you, so I’ve brought it back again,” and laying the money upon the table he was gone before the widow recovered from her first amazement.

Among the pioneers coming from down country during this epoch were Ephraim Farrington and Zebedee Dean, the latter but little more than a boy. They remained the first night at a house, near the Hoosac, at Scrabtown. Mr. Farrington took the land in New Providence, where Mr. Dean spent a long life, as he bought the place from Farrington at his majority, and Mr. Farrington went to New Ashford, where he still resides, the oldest inhabitant of that town.

While the troubles in the church were shaking the religious life of Cheshire the mutterings of war were abroad in the settlements again. England so lately beaten by colonial grit could not forget her love of oppression.

The impressment of American seamen, the non-relinquishing of frontier forts, according to agreement, and the stirring up of strife among our Indians were all causes of the war of 1812. When the “Orders in Council,” were followed by the retaliatory decrees of Napoleon at Milan and Berlin, and all this by the American embargo, the declaration of war was inevitable. While through the county, and indeed the state, there was a large minority that was opposed to the war, the town itself to a great degree was loyal.

Captain Joseph Bucklin of Cheshire, was the son of Darius Bucklin, brother of Mrs. Daniel Brown, while his mother, Hannah Brown, was sister of the Captain. To Joseph Bucklin was given command of a company in the 9th Berkshire Regiment, in which were enlisted men from Cheshire. One company of this regiment was commanded by Winfield Scott, a young man winning his first laurels then. At Pittsfield, upon the grounds now occupied by the Maplewood Institute, a barracks and hospital were established, and according to Joseph Smith, Esq., Pittsfield's pleasing historian, 2,500 men were quartered there ready for service. To each was given a bounty of \$16 for five years and 160 acres of public land. Of the loyalty of the town of Cheshire, and the feeling with which the inhabitants entered into the conflict, one can judge by reading the following paper, copied word for word from a document now extant, and dated July 12th, 1812:

"At a loyal meeting of the inhabitants of the town of Cheshire at the brick school house at three o'clock in the afternoon, made choice of Daniel Coman, moderator.

VOTED, To raise the soldiers wages who are detached in this town.

VOTED, To raise their wages to eleven dollars per month, if the government do not raise them to that sum.

VOTED, Each soldier shall bring proof of the time he has served, and a regular discharge of his duty, and raise his pay six months after his discharge.

VOTED, To adopt the following resolutions :

1st. *Resolved*, That the declaration of war against Great Britain and her dependencies was dignified and just, and the only measure left for a nation to resort to that decrees they will be free, and although we have long been convinced from the *hostile, faithless, piratical, savage* conduct of Great Britain which for half a century has deluged Europe and Asia, that her ambition would know no bounds, short of desolating this happy country. Yes ! Like misery she seeks for sociability yet it is left to the present day for her openly to avow that in her train to ruin not only the rich and opulent European, the peaceful Indostan, but the patriotic and free-born American shall act a conspicuous part, thanks be to Heaven her mad career is arrested, and the genius of Liberty once more speaks with a voice that gladdens every patriot's heart.

2d. *Resolved*, That the address of the Senate of the Commonwealth speaks the language of a Hancock, an Adams, and a Warren, in the days that tried men's souls. It animates, it cheers, it feeds that flame of Liberty which we are proud to say shall never but with death be extinguished, and then it shall be mingled with one last benediction to posterity.

3d. *Resolved*, That we were the great family of America as friends and will cordially unite with them in the support of our beloved government and constitution. But woe to the *Tory*, whether he be the *Tory* of the present day, or the *Tory* of the revolution, whose means of information gave him an opportunity to form his opinions on principles. Their fatal influence has twice brought us to the brink of ruin. We thank Heaven we have escaped, and pledge ourselves that they never again shall have that opportunity.

4th. *Resolved*, That the so-called Washington Benevolent Society, although formed of unauspicious plants, so long as they demean themselves as peaceable citi-

zens, so long shall they be under the protection of government ; but should they be found in the support of a foreign government, of France, or of Great Britain, the vengeance of an indignant people will consume them, and the insignia of the Father of his Country shall be wrested by the eagle of America from such unworthy protection and we do further

*Resolve.* That a committee of safety and vigilance be now chosen to consist of a chairman and eight members one of whom shall be secretary.

The said committee shall be authorized to watch over the public welfare, to deal with the hand of moderation and forbearance towards those, who from want of information, may be led to acts that they would abhor, were they sensible to the true state of our country ; but to those, who wilfully undertake by word, or by deed, to set at defiance the laws and constituted authorities of the United States ; whose means of information preclude the possibility of acting ignorantly, let the vengeance of the committee be dealt in that manner that shall teach them that as free men we mean to live, and as free men we mean to die.

MAJOR JOHN LELAND,  
CAPT. DANIEL SMITH,  
COL. PETER WERDEN,  
CAPT. ASAHEL POTTER,  
CAPT. RICHARD COMAN,  
JOHN WELLS, JUN., ESQ.,  
HEZEKIAH MASON, ESQ.,  
CAPT. JONATHAN FISH, JCN.,

} Committee of Vigilance  
and Safety, 1812.

CAPT. DEXTER MASON, Chairman.

The Pittsfield Sun of July, 1812, states that on the 30th of that month the good women of Cheshire went down to Pittsfield laden with catables of every name and kind for the soldiers, as a dinner was given to the regiment. The Cheshire ladies also showed their patriotic interest by knitting, during the winter, 143 pair of socks for them, besides mittens. One pair of these mittens we can trace at this distant day, and know that they kept one pair of hands from freezing before Quebec, and were worn through and through by the owner ere he could dispense with them that terrible winter. Daniel Reed was a hardy farmer and had despised such a weakness as wearing mittens hitherto. But during the watches of that winter, on the wild tramp up the Kennebec, in his stay in front, and retreat from Quebec, the warm, home-knit mittens were his great comfort, which, when he wore them through at last, he darned and patched while sitting before the smoky camp-fire.

In the possession of the family of Tolman Whitmarsh of Cheshire, may be seen an immense pewter platter, and some pewter basins, which were polished on the 29th of July, 1812. to the highest degree of brightness, and sent to the public dinner at Pittsfield, filled with toothsome viands for the soldiers located there. These soldiers were gathered around a mammoth table in an open field and fed with rare dishes until everything was consumed and the great platters and two gallon basins were scraped.

These soldiers encamped at Pittsfield, in the company of which Captain Joseph Bucklin was the officer, and which belonged to the 9th Regiment, were our fighting soldiers of 1812. Late in the war when Governor Strong called on troops to fortify Boston, a regiment from Berkshire went on and in it were from Cheshire: Barton Bryant, Jerry Ross, Jesse Leonard, Erving Bryant, Clark Hoxie, Bill Walters, Benjamin Browning, Elisha Stafford, Spencer Jacques, and as their officer, Col. Harry Wilmarth.

Elisha Stafford was a son of Col. Joab Stafford. Whether he was in any other detachment during the war of 1812, is not positively known, but it is certain that he died in 1813, from disease contracted during the service.

Barton Bryant was drafted in this levy and walked all the way to Boston to report to his company.

Spencer Jacques was in Captain Joseph Bucklin's company at Lundy's Lane, Chippewa, Erie, Brownville and other engagements.

Benjamin Browning served his country in 1835, in the war with the Seminoles mid the everglades of Florida, and again in the Mexican campaign of 1845.

David Remington was drafted from Stafford's Hill, but like the hunter who would not join the hunt "Because the lion's whelps were abroad," nor the sailors to sail in the bay, "Because the clouds were dark and the ship might go down," staid at home and hired a substitute.

The hunters came home in glee, the sailors rode in safety over the harbor bar, but an earthquake shock swallowed up the town and the hunter who remained at home. The soldiers returned from the battlefields of 1812 and many lived to a green old age, while Daniel Remington went out, clad in a surtout, a muffler about his neck, and woolen mittens on his hands, well protected against the wintery storm sweeping over the hill and never returned. In a hollow they found his form wrapped in its sleety shroud.

The company under Captain Joseph Bucklin did worthy service for the American cause. Dr. Holland only gives the troops of Western Massachusetts credit for going down to Boston when Governor Strong was frightened by the threatened invasion of the foe along the sea coast, where they remained a month, had a good time generally, then bade the Governor good-bye, disbanded and returned home. This, no doubt, was Governor Strong's war, or an episode in it. His record, perhaps, was not as patriotic as it might have been, nor as brilliant as that of some. We claim more for our Berkshire companies than the Governor wanted them to do, and in these companies, the 9th and 21st, were the Cheshire men. Joseph Smith, Esq., in his history of Pittsfield says: "These Berkshire regiments were noted for their gallantry, efficiency and losses." A statement that could scarcely be true if all the service they did was confined to the "forty days in

camp, the extremely pleasant time, and the dress review on Boston Common," of Gov. Strong. Men who were officers in the 9th Regiment tell of that July midnight, when Colonel Miller's voice rang out over the field of Lundy's Lane in the fearless words, "I'll try, sir!" as he went forward in compliance with his General's wishes to secure the hotly contested battery. They tell, as eye witnesses, of those other battles on the Niagara frontier, and again, many a story falling from the lips of some old soldier by the bar-room fire records their presence at Sacketts Harbor, and behind the entrenchments at Plattsburg, where beyond the swiftly flowing Saranacs they held Prevost and his veterans, while McDonough won the day on Champlain. It was at Plattsburg that British prisoners were captured and taken to Cheshire.

Among the band were many officers who owned valuable jewels, and could command money. It was not deemed safe to parole them at Pittsfield where lived many avowed Tories, and friends of King George were known to abound, so it was, that among the loyal yeomanry of Cheshire, homes were provided for them, and the drowsy tranquility which had hitherto reigned uninterruptedly in its streets was broken up, and they were made bright and noisy by the scarlet uniforms, and their wearers. There are a few in our midst to-day who remember these strangers, and tell anecdotes of their lives and doings. Many of them were young men. Men of rank in England, fond of pleasure and society. Some of them were attracted by the pretty faces, and pleasant manners of the young ladies of the day who in turn were gratified with attentions paid to them by these elegant men of nobility. It is said that their presence at the village merry makings made its impression upon the dress and style of the rustic belles, who sought to make them what the fastidious Britons desired. Among the noblest and best remembered of these officers were Fox, Brighton, Rowe, Ross and Cresswick. The last two sought as wives daughters of two fiery patriots who scouted the idea of accepting into their households sons of the hated foe. Rowe, more fortunate won his wife.

Being on parole they were allowed to prolong their walks, usually in numbers and with a guard, to a point where guide boards told that the town limits ceased. If the dance they wished to attend, or the lady fair upon whom they wished to call was beyond this point, they pulled up the post and planted it beyond the place. Many a sly flirtation was carried on, and some of the Englishmen began to consider America not so bad a place, after all, although taught to shiver at the very mention of the troublesome, ignorant rebels of the United States.

Upon the brow of the hill leading down to the Kitchen, stood, in those days, a pretty, brown house, buried in a perfect wealth of shrubbery; tall



trees shook their branches over the low roof, and through the narrow hall the perfume of flowers floated in summer days; every where was the evidence of an ingenious woman's taste and fancy. From a sort of stoop at the rear of the house glimmered the garden, full of the sweet old time flowers, over the stone wall that bounded it, wild clematis, and creepers with scarlet flowers grew and bloomed at will. By the wayside glistened the smithy's forge, and here Tolman Whitmarsh hammered and sung, and laughed, the veritable picture of the village blacksmith. Gathered about this forge in rainy days the soldiers would recount the experiences of their captivity from the moment when they first found themselves, with dismay, in the power of the enemy, were relieved of their muskets, and marched away as prisoners, and indignation filled their manly faces as they related the story of that sunny, September day on Lake Champlain, of their belief that they went sailing up the little cove after the advance boat to victory, when suddenly the mask was thrown off, and the "Yankees," swarmed like bees all around them, leaped into their boat, headed it off shore, and conveyed them helpless to the Yankee lines. Around this forge they often joined in song until, to quote one who tells the story, "They almost raised the rafters," and, although their words were "Highland Mary," and "Bonnie Dundee" they no doubt sang in heart to "English Nora" or "Dutch Kathleen," and thought of the yellow Avon, and the rushing Elbe.

Around the post-office, where ever gathers a crowd in small country towns, was always seen an eager group clad in scarlet, awaiting the distribution of the mail. A word from friends, so far away, was a rarer thing then, than in the times of steam and ocean telegraphs, and to receive a letter one of the most cheering hopes of the day.

Among these captive officers there were two whose names are often mentioned and who are remembered because of their "gay and festive" ways, their love of a good time and genial manners, Lieutenant Carr and Ensign Ladd.

Many was the frolic they lent their hand to, and the mischievous pranks they played upon the sober going villagers. Houses were thrown open for the board and lodgings of the foreign soldiers. Many were quartered at Capt. Daniel Brown's, and the great garret turned into a dormitory. Aunt Frelove's large hall with its swinging partitions was utilized during these times, as well as the rooms in Mr. Hall's tavern opposite the church. At Levi Mason's, who lived where Liberty Hammond now owns the property, there was a detachment, and on the farms of William P. Bennet, and Mrs. Brown, as well as many other places accommodations were procured. To six officers were usually three waiters. Many of the men, some of

whom were Hessians, were allowed to hire out to the farmers and lumberers of the town. Upon a rock just below Mrs. Roselle Lane's was to be seen until within a few years the autograph of these men where they had cut their names, the work of some idle moment probably. Perhaps, done on some sunny day when wandering over the fields, and dreaming of the sweethearts waiting for them in their far off island home.

It so chanced, that Lieutenant Carr, Ensign Ladd, and others of the same stamp, were quartered at the Hall tavern. One stormy night, when all resources for amusement seemed exhausted, they secured a strong wire, and in the late twilight young Ladd stole across the street, climbed up the belfry stairs, and to the iron tongue of the huge bell attached the wire which he put through the window shutter, closed the doors, and retraced his steps, introducing the other end of the fine, almost invisible wire, to their own room, they retired at an early hour, and were soon apparently wrapped in deep, heavy slumbers. It was when the clocks were striking for midnight that the church bell began to peal forth its wildest notes, sounding across the Cheshire green, arousing the good people from their slumbers, windows were thrown open, doors unbarred, heads thrust out, and as the jubilant notes thrown from off the iron tongue pealed louder and faster, echoing down the valley, and resounding from the hills, the folk began to muster, the lanterns glimmered all over the common, the old and young, men and women, villagers, and farmers on panting steeds, all gathered in hot haste, and beneath the starless night, and in the dripping rain inquired breathlessly of one another, "What of the night?"

On the low land from Capt. Brown's garden to the river stretched the unbroken meadows of the Hoosac. Here the officers laid out their ground for foot ball, and here daily in fine weather they played matched games.

Down by the river they spread their long tables with such viands as they most desired, never forgetting the finest brands of liquors and wine, with immense wooden and pewter bowls filled with loaf sugar crushed into pieces of a proper size, and tankards of water. Here the beaten side marched with the winners whom they treated to whatever their fancy dictated.

At last Lieutenant Carr and Ensign Ladd for want, possibly, of anything better to employ the time professed conversion to the American cause, doffed their becoming scarlet uniforms, joined the American Army, received the bounty, and, truth compels us to say it, deserted—went over the Canada line where once again installed in King George's army they were in the battle of Waterloo, and helped to swell the list of England's slain on that victorious field. Mr. Smith states that Dr. H. H. Childs of Pittsfield was physician in charge of all these prisoners, both soldiers and marines, with rank and pay of Hospital Surgeon, and power to appoint his

own assistants. Dr. Isaac Hodges was a native of Savoy, practising his profession at this date on Stafford's Hill and was the physician known here to have the care of the sick among the foreign soldiers. He probably received his appointment from Dr. H. H. Childs of Pittsfield. No doctor however skilled is able to defeat death always and a low grave on the hillside beneath the verdure and the flowers bears witness to his unerring archery. A cold, gray stone by the side of which succeeding generations of the village people have stood with a sigh of tender pity for the young soldier—dead on a foreign shore—records that, "Here lies Ensign Roberts of His Majesty's Light Infantry."

In September 1814, two strangers were arrested in the village supposed to be spies. At the close of 1814, the peace of Ghent settled the war, and the soldiers, Britons and Hessians, who had been increasing through 1814, were gathered together for the last march in America. They had played their last game of foot ball on the grassy, Hoosac meadows, they had bidden a final good-bye to the scenes and friends of their captivity, taken hurried farewells from the girls with whom they had danced, and strolled in leafy lanes at sunset, some of them parting as lovers part, and to the sound of the bugle and the drum the procession wound slowly over the hills to Pittsfield where joining their brothers at the cantonment, they were taken by march to Canada, thence to England, to fight under the Iron Duke of Wellington against Napoleon.

In 1816 the post-office was removed to Scrabbletown and kept by Edmond Foster in a building that stood beyond the river crossing. Captain Edmond Foster entered the regular army prior to the war of 1812. His papers of admission were signed by Thomas Jefferson, and those of his dismissal by James Madison. He was in some of the most important battles of the war and was a Captain in the 9th Berkshire Regiment. He had two brothers William and Charles, the former was First Lieutenant, and the latter Second Lieutenant in different companies. Winfield Scott was Captain also in this same regiment, just beginning, then, to enter upon that path of glory which widened in the Mexican war and culminated in the rebellion. Foster was wounded at Chippewa, and for bravery was breveted Major. After the prisoners were quartered at Pittsfield and Cheshire, Major Foster was given charge of a cantonment in both places. This brought him frequently to this village and to the home of Captain Daniel Brown, where quarters were given to some in the spacious garret. Here he met and married Sally, second daughter of Captain Brown, and settled in Cheshire. He died at Hoosac, N. Y. His family is scattered. Mrs. Foster died at an advanced age in Cheshire. One son and one daughter with several grandchildren still reside there, two daughters, Mrs.

William G. Waterman and Mrs. Justis Lane have lived for many years in Illinois and one son Lieutenant D. B. Foster died in the fall of 1883.

Up to 1816, no fires were allowed in the meeting house to worship God by. All were clad in heavy clothes. Gentlemen wore "great coats" tippets, and striped mittens. Ladies fortified themselves with foot stoves, a square box-like affair, made of tin, perforated with holes, and a drawer at the bottom, in which was put the last thing before leaving home, some red coals, and perhaps a firebrand. A bail served to carry the article, and placed upon the floor of the pew, the feet of the owner upon it, the good woman found it no uncomfortable arrangement as she tucked herself away in the corner of the high-backed, ancient pew. A paper, dated 1816, tells that certain members of the Third church undertake to provide stoves and pipe, and if it proves a failure, return to the donors the money they donate. In 1816 the town votes to pay the soldiers of the war of 1812, \$15 per month beside the government prices for their services during the conflict.

In 1812 Elder John Leland published some essays upon religious topics in a pamphlet form. They were, says the *Pittsfield Sun*, on fine paper of handsome type and interesting matter.

In 1816 Allan B. Green was doing business at the carpenter and joiner trade.

In 1810, Captain Brown gave the land from the Hoosac river, past the store of R. M. Cole, through the village, for a new road, and it was laid out as it exists to-day. He then closed the one first surveyed, farther to the north, and over the hills, the new one merging into the old at the foot of the Kitchen Hill.

Early in this era Samuel Smith's family settled at Stafford's Hill, and in 1812, Mr. Bliss (father of Charles and Rachel Bliss) purchased the farm now owned by Philo Leonard. At his home down east he had been burned out, and in beginning again preferred *new* surroundings. Mr. Loomis carried on the carding and fulling business at Scrabbletown and was succeeded by his son Luther, who also manufactured cheese boxes.

In January, 1816, a very remarkable natural phenomenon was witnessed by the residents of the town. A heavy fall of snow commenced toward nightfall. None of the flakes were smaller than a "four pence ha' penny bit," and during the night as they fell steadily and straight to the earth they were accompanied by terrific thunder bolts, and brilliant lightning flashes, that gave every house and hill and spire the appearance of liquid fire. Dr. Cushing riding over the hills toward home at midnight drove his horse close to a wayside smithery that he might ascertain if possible what it was that wrapped the sides of the rude building, its roof, steps, and window panes in vivid red. Taking his long whip, while his

horse crouched almost to the earth in affright at the thunder peals and sharp lightning chains, he scraped off from the building a little pile of its covering and held it in his hand. It was only snow—pure and colorless as ever fell from the clouds—and the doctor drove home satisfied that some peculiar condition of the atmosphere caused the delusion.

## CHAPTER VI.

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FROM 1817—1827.

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CHEESE BUSINESS. FARMERS. COTTON MANUFACTURES. JONATHAN FARNUM. STAGES. DAVID SMITH. GENERAL TRAINING. ELNATHAN SWEET CALLED TO THIRD CHURCH. HEZEKIAH MASON. CHURCH DISCIPLINE. EDDY MASON. SQUIRE JAMES BARKER. WILLIAM BROWN. THE VILLAGE INN. CULTIVATION OF FLAX. DANIEL CHAPMAN.

In days of peace there is a charm in reviewing the military history of our country; a fascination in reading of the stirring campaigns, as seated at ease, one watches a general move a regiment or brigade like a rook, on the board, sweeping down upon an unguarded queen. But, in fact, there is more charm in the peaceful avocations of life, and during the decade which now commences the tide of improvement was flowing rapidly onward. Changes showing progress since the infancy of the settlement were visible on every hand. Some one has said that "Genius was only taking trouble," and in the mills and industries much careful painstaking was seen, which, perhaps, laid the foundation for the manufacturing successes and the colossal fortunes the years have known.

Russell Brown, son of Caleb Brown, who watched the howling wolves on Pork Lane was doing business in a store near the house of Mrs. George Slaid, which house and store, built by Eli Greene, he owned for many years. He was a speculator in cheese, buying dairies from the farmers all around. While the business carried on at the village in various ways served to add to its life and the number of its houses, yet the farmers on the surrounding farms of this town have ever been its backbone and its sinew, they have been the corner stone of all prosperity, and to their intelligent care and patient toil, to the plodding lives, and untiring labor of the farmer's wives is due the success the town met, and the name it won so high on the roll of the dairying interests. Russell Brown on the hill, and Moses Wolcott at the foot of it, were the places that led in this business of dairy buying. Moses Wolcott had associated his son, N. K. Wolcott, with him in the mercantile and speculating business. The latter was also appointed

postmaster in 1818. The cheese bought by these parties was stored in their rooms sometimes for weeks, sometimes longer. They were arranged on long, narrow shelves, care observed that they should not touch each other. At stated intervals some person, way-wise in the business, turned and rubbed them to prevent moulding. To properly cure them for market, and manage them well was a very particular task, as to gain an unvarying reputation of sending the best brands of cheese to the city markets was to win a fortune. The teamsters who plied the business of carrying these large dairies to "the river," at Troy or Schoodac, drove their long wagons, constructed for the purpose, to the doors of the cheese house, and loaded up the night before the start; frequently the cheese were packed in casks. At about half past three they made the first move, and by the time the sun was well up in the eastern sky they would be driving into Hancock across the Taconics.

Watering and feeding the span of horses, taking their own morning meal they were off again and a little past noon, stopping at a wayside inn, they dined and refreshed after the morning ride, entered Troy at two. Driving to the wharf, they shipped the load of cheese for New York, returned to the busy streets, when, taking on a load of flour to sell at the stores of Brown or Wolcott, they turned toward home, spending the night at the inn just out from the city, they dined at Hancock and reached home for supper. Although occupying more time than a trip to Troy does to-day it was pretty good speed for the means they had at command.

A cotton factory was established during this decade at Cheshire Harbor by Elisha Jenks who owned and carried it on for many years. It was running successfully at his death and passed into the hands of other business men so that the busy hum of loom and spindle still greets the ear and the little "Boro" holds its own.

Russell Brown was engaged in cotton mills at Adams (South Village), as early as 1817. He was interested in a cotton factory built by a stock company arrangement. Caleb and Manning Brown were also in the manufacturing business at different times.

In the beginning work was given from these factories to Cheshire women, who took the cotton when spun and wove it in their looms, returning many yards of cloth annually to the mills.

To a descendant of a Pork Lane family it has been given to amass a fortune that would be great wealth to all of our Americans, save perhaps, to the few; but to any one commencing with little and making it by his own energies and capabilities, it is more than colossal.

In the month of November 1819, another peculiar exhibition of nature alarmed the people, causing them to believe that the "times and half a times," were indeed all told, and the last day right at the door. Arising on the morn-

ing of the 9th of the month they found a darkness all around them, that the advancing morning did not dissipate. The clocks told the hour of sunrise, but "Old Sol" for once was not on time. Eagerly all the people watched his coming; but a dull leaden cloud covered the whole sky; a yellow gloom settled upon the entire landscape. Candles were lighted in every house. In some instances people were too much affrighted to rise from their beds, but waited in terror for the end. A little past midday the gloom brightened a trifle, it was, however, several days before the sun broke out and then it appeared a small white ball, cold and shorn of its glory. Many claimed that its efficacy was all gone, that never again would it heat the ground or ripen the golden corn; that the rich, hot days of other summers would never be known again, a fallacy which time dissipated as it has many another.

In the spring of 1827 Daniel Brown put in fourteen water looms at Cheshire Harbor. As the men worked at their task people stopped often to watch them, or dropped in to inquire how the job progressed. Many a wise business man shook his head and smiled with pity at the folly of such an outlay, as he wondered how any one could be so foolhardy as to take such a risk, or be so stupid as to suppose that the cloth of fourteen looms would ever be needed or sold. They would be compelled to store it while waiting for market, and the slow sales would destroy all profits.

Captain Charles Converse and Anthony Burton opened a wagon shop on the hill, and James Brown bought out the smithy's forge with its four fires. This James Brown was grandson of Abraham Brown; so also were Luther and Thomas Brown, well-known by a later generation. Daniel Brown, son of Abraham, married Nancy, second daughter of Captain Brown, and was father of Luther Brown. Luke, also son of Abraham, was the father of Thomas.

Jonathan Farnum came into the country at an early day, (1796,) settling at the Hill. He was a butcher and done a lively business. He carried calves and young stock to "the river" in a long peculiar shaped vehicle with a cover, to which was given the name of "the ark."

In 1823 stages were put upon the road running through Cheshire. Some routes had been founded in other parts of the state prior to this; but traveling by private conveyance was largely practiced throughout the states, and there was comparatively little known of stage coaches before 1800.

Ladies traveled alone on horseback, taking long journeys, riding late in the evening, fearing no evil, and meeting none. If such a traveler chanced to pass a stranger on some lone unfrequented road, he simply said "Good evening, mistress," and pursued his way. It sometimes happened that when the smoky October days came, when the busy time for the Berk-



shire farmers was over and a horse could be spared, the young wife would long to see the sweet home she had left down at Swansy or Rehobeth, or still more distant Taunton or Warwick, a homesick feeling would follow her as she thought of the placid face of the old mother sitting on the broad stoop those soft October afternoons, the father by her side reading from the page of *The Book*, or perhaps chatting with a neighbor who had leaned over the garden gate a minute to inquire of the "up country" people. A strong desire would come over her to wander once again through the Swansy garden, or press the soft green grass of Taunton Green, and if any in the settlement were going "down east," the wife would take the baby, mount the pony, and go in company the long journey.

The stages of 1823 were a section of the great thoroughfare from Boston and Albany running through Stephentown, Hancock and Lanesborough. Coming from beyond the mountains towards the west, as they approached the town of Cheshire, they plunged abruptly down a defile among the hills that led to the settlement called "Thunder," with its low school house and blacksmith shop. Lumbering up the opposite slope they made the decline over the hill at the right—as the brook road was then a bank of tangled ferns and wild undergrowth—and so into the hollow known as the Kitchen, where, passing the saw and grist-mill, crossing the rustic bridge that spanned the brook, they clattered up the stony highway, now a narrow, disused lane back of the house owned by Calvin Ingalls, by the Six Principle church, along a way long since closed, but clearly defined by a growth of low trees and bushes, down to the main street, which it crosses at a point near to the old burying-ground. At this point the driver of the coach sounded the loud tally-ho horn, turned his horses' heads toward the tavern of Moses Wolcott below the hill, and 'mid the admiring gaze of the children on the green before the brick school house—who stopped their plays at recess to make their manners to the strangers—dashed up between the Lombardy poplars and the great stone steps of the inn, where all was bustle and stir. The travelers weary with their long ride over the rough, hilly roads, leaped eagerly to the ground, and were soon regaling themselves with the generous fare provided, while Aunt Freelove was one moment serving the brown bread, pork and beans, hot, juicy steak and mealy potatoes, and the next, in her husband's momentary absence, dealing rum and cider brandy through the little gate before the bar with equally deft hand. Outside, before the porch and along the platform, merry jokes were cracked, the smoking, panting horses were exchanged for fresh relays, brought from beneath the sheds at the rear of the yard, attached to the coach and the moment of departure announced by the driver. The mail was brought from the post-office, thrown on the top of the vehicle, the travelers clamber-

ed to their seats, the driver mounted his box, and they whirled away up the village street, past the church, over the hills to the east.

David Smith who had kept his tavern on the Hill removed about this time to the place where Shubal Lincoln now lives, opened a tavern for a stage house and received also the appointment of postmaster. This was called the Half-Way House, and when the trip [from Albany to Northampton required two days for its accomplishment the night was spent at this house by all the passengers, and the road taken at an early hour next morning.

Mrs. J. Bucklin is a daughter of David Smith and remembers with perfect distinctness the arrival of the stages, which was the daily event of importance—the one ripple from the outside world—remembers the grand looking coaches, red and yellow, with their wide seats, cushioned with green or red morocco, making them soft and easy ; the middle seat being supplied with a back by a broad leather band which hooked from side to side, after those who occupied the farther seats were in their places. Through Savoy, Plainfield, Deerfield, they found their way to Northampton, where we will leave them for the historian of these towns to carry them on their farther journey.

The coaches, on the line from the south, left Pittsfield at about one o'clock in the afternoon transversed the shores of the beautiful lake which bears its Indian name Pontoosuc, wound over the hills of the old road, past the Amos Pettibone farm and Nathaniel Bliss's, rounded the curve by the cluster of mammoth elms and the gambrel-roofed house of Dr. Lyon memory, at which point a long blast announced to Aunt Freelove the time to place her smoking viands on the table in the long dining room, and to the postmaster to have the mail all ready, for the stop was short, and North Adams must be reached at six o'clock. This was a branch of the through route to Northampton. Mr. John Burt, whose venerable form is often seen on our streets, owned that section of the route from Hancock to Stafford's Hill in its very infancy. Otis Peek and Porter Peek were two of the first drivers who drove the coaches from Northampton to Pittsfield. Three days were occupied in performing the entire route from Albany to Northampton.

Another diversion was made and many small towns and hamlets accommodated by putting on a line of stages which run from Troy over the mountains, crossing through New Ashford they went over Jones's Nose, down the mountain side by a road sometimes known as the Bellows Road, turned at a point where are now the ruins of a saw-mill owned by D. B. Brown, and so around to the South Village in Adams, from thence up the valley to North Adams and Williamstown.

The military lessons taught by the two wars with England, the long and

sanguinary revolution which declared the independence of the colonies, and left them the United States under a republican form of government, and the shorter war of 1812, which did, in very truth, make their independence an assured thing, had evoked a feeling that it was necessary to maintain these lessons, therefore the institution of general training was in vogue for a long term of years, and a thorough drill was the consequence. This day was a gala day and crowds assembled where they could view the village, the green, and watch the gaily dressed officers and soldiers that they trained in true military style. Many who recall these training days, among the memories of an era gone by forever speak with the greatest admiration of General William Plunkett, whose imposing form and presence, when acting as commandant could not be forgotten. This gentleman, although never a resident of Cheshire, was associated in business at one time with Russell Brown, married his wife here, and had many friends among the people. He was elected as general in 1827.

The Cheshire Third Church, after 1817, had no settled pastor until 1820, when Elnathan Sweet, a young minister from Stephentown, was invited to come over and preach to the people, an invitation that he accepted, preaching from the text :

“I ask, therefore, for what intent have ye sent for me?”

The answer given by the church to this question was as follows :

“To preach the gospel without deviation, to administer the ordinances of God’s House, to indulge and forbear with Elder Leland’s peculiar tenets, and not mix in any way with the troubles of the ‘Aggrieved Brethren.’”

The church, believing that Elder Sweet agreed to these conditions, engaged him, and he became their accepted and popular pastor. Under his ministrations the people flocked to the House of God, the pews were filled and the galleries echoed once more with the voice of song and praise. As time went on Elder Sweet conversed occasionally with the aggrieved party and so palpable did the way seem to him, from his standpoint, that he could not avoid the feeling that a little persuasion, and the right word would convince Elder Leland of the great benefit it would be to the church if he could walk with it in its ordinances, therefore he lent his influence to the calling of a meeting at which Rev. Mr. Hull from Berlin was present as moderator and at which the following vote was taken :

“Upon a review of sentiments contained in a certain paper written by Elder John Leland, bearing date August 22, 1811, which sentiments go to undermine church discipline and table communion, which sentiments as far as they go to undervalue the institution, we disapprove of and have no fellowship with. And now, as children to a father, to Elder Leland, as a church we entreat you to renounce these sentiments that we might take the bread at your hands. Nevertheless, if Elder Leland cannot see the above as an error, we still feel to bear with him, praying the Lord will show it

to him, and that he will be faithful in the discharge of those duties which he can go forward conscientiously in."

Elder Leland was in New Ashford at the time, but as the narrator of old tells the tale, was swiftly notified of the manœuvre, and whence it arose. He was greatly grieved, quoting from his own words:

"That Elder Sweet whom I have intrusted in the nature of God's Kingdom, fostered in the bosom of my own affections, and introduced into Cheshire, should turn from and enter a conspiracy against me."

The church was grieved, too. "Elder Sweet's popularity somewhat sullied." A meeting was called to talk matters over, Elder Leland came over from New Ashford. Nothing could be effected. Elder Leland had seen no reason to change his views. The church had promised to forbear and wait upon him, and they could see no reason to change. Some of the members who had learned to sympathize with Elder Sweet were excommunicated, and together with the aggrieved, and those who had never joined any church, were the nucleus around which a new one was started, and which the year 1824 found fairly in operation, under the name of Elder Sweet's Church. And from this time for several years there were two churches of the same faith and practice at Cheshire Corners.

The Third church was somewhat puzzled as to the best mode of action. Elder Leland preached to them, and in the fall of 1826, John Vincent was ordained so that he could act as administrator and officiate upon occasions of communion. But the times were somewhat gloomy, the trials were sore and grievous, there appeared to come no more seasons for Zion to prosper. There were no more additions, the disagreements and revolutions had reduced this once strong body to one hundred members, and at that point it bid fair to remain, except as lessened now and then by death and removal.

Hezekiah Mason who had ever been an influential member of the church had, as will be remembered, been a great admirer of Elder Covell, and upon him the original church had been inclined to thrust the somewhat onerous burden of meeting the pledged debt.

In June 1811, we find the death of Sally, wife of Hezekiah Mason, who died aged 57 years leaving 12 children and 18 grandchildren. In November 1811, this notice appears in the paper:

"Married at Stephentown, N. Y., by Rev. Benjamin Sheldon, Hezekiah Mason, Esq., of Cheshire, Mass., to Miss Elizabeth Sheldon, daughter of the officiating clergyman."

Hezekiah Mason moved to Stephentown at this time, and the loss of his name on the church and town books is very noticeable. He is brought back once more. On that last ride to the tomb, for he rests where he predicted he should in the long ago when he walked over the hills with Uncle Stephen Northrop.

Elder Elnathan Sweet's church attached itself to the Shaftsbury Association in 1826 numbering only thirty a small part of those who were members at the time the meeting house was erected ; but blessings seemed to follow and in 1833 there are 50 names on the list of membership.

Human nature holds its own, and that these early Christians met with the same trials that come to their children, and that they succeeded no better than do their descendants, is clearly evident.

At a church meeting held August 2d, 1800, is found the following record, and one may pause a moment to picture the astonishment, and horror with which the devout brothers and sisters must have listened to the words of Brother B. who asserts in open meeting:

"We do not know that Christ ever made a public prayer. The Bible is no better than an old almanack, and all forms are nothing and we are in great error."

Sister Daniel Carpenter must have been a woman somewhat in advance of the time. She did honor to her husband's home, and doubtless helped him much in amassing the fortune he left. Her daughters were reared as ladies, and although the Deacon insisted that they should be taught to spin, and to manage all cooking and dairy affairs, they kept help which, tradition says, they frequently coaxed into doing the "stents" given them to do, spinning their rolls and hatchelling the flax. Sister Carpenter with her manifold duties, could not always manage the monthly church meetings ; but met with admirable coolness the efforts of the stern deacons, and church committees who tried so hard to lead her in the path that is narrow and straight for the children of men. As frequently as every alternate month they went to confer with Sister Carpenter concerning the "feelings of her mind," and returned reporting to the church that were in meeting assembled that they found her in "a comfortable state," whereupon a vote is taken to forbear yet a little longer, and two months later the committee men would start out on another expedition up to the Capenter homestead to inquire of the mind of its busy mistress.

March 3rd 1821, Joseph Seagrave is admitted by letter from the church at Woodstock, Conn., and chosen clerk by the Cheshire First church in place of Allan Brown moved away. March 20th 1823, Joseph Seagrave left Cheshire and Levi Mason is church clerk. Eddy Mason was son of Brooks Mason, an early settler; he was blessed with a family of far more than common ability. To each member he gave a good education ; Jane Mason attended school in Central New York, two sons Alanson P. and Sumner R. Mason studied theology at Hamilton and were ordained to the ministry. Sumner R. was settled at or near Boston ; taking the train one Saturday afternoon, to meet an appointment made to speak in some rural pulpit on Sunday morning, the gifted minister fell a victim to a railroad disaster.

Alanson P. has been acting in some of the religious departments of the Baptist church for many years although not in active preaching.

When Jane Mason was a girl of scarcely twenty, she promised to become the wife of one Hasbrock who was studying for the ministry at Hamilton.

It was in 1826 that the call came from Burmah, from the faithful band of missionaries toiling beneath the torrid sun. This call was sent on to Madison University for volunteers, and six young men responded, among them Hasbrock. Intent upon his preparations, for there was but a short time before the day appointed to sail, he asked one of the brothers to go and break the tidings to his sister.

Arriving at the school, Mason rang the bell, and was ushered into the parlor where he was soon joined by his sister. After the first greetings were spoken Mason continued:

“Jane, could you be ready, do you think, in just two weeks to sail with Hasbrock for Burmah as a missionary?”

Confused by the sudden announcement hidden in the question, perceiving from the solemn earnestness of the manner that her brother was dealing with facts, she answered while the tears crowded to her eyes.

“Yes, I can be ready in as many days if it be the Lord’s will.”

Then she listened to the story of the demand for workers, of her lover’s service, and the ship at anchor in the offing ready for them to embark.

In two weeks all things were ready, and the bride stood by the side of her missionary husband with all the good-byes spoken, and the shores of her native land disappearing from view. For nearly sixty years did this woman labor in Burmah, her husband went down at his post in middle life. Twice she returned to visit America. One son took his father’s place.

In 1883, she left the mission field that had grown up under her eye, and which had been familiar ground from its earliest infancy, and went home to meet the reward of a life spent in devotion to the nations in darkness.

There were up to the close of this decade no lawyers to tell of in Cheshire. Squire Ezra Barker was justice of the peace, and understood law sufficiently to act as practitioner for all cases that required arbitration in the neighborhood. His excellent judgment enabled him to decide matters left to him with skill, and in a manner to give universal content.

Squire Ezra Barker put up the large red house beyond the Hoosac whose chimneys may be seen from the village. There he lived for many years, dispensing a generous hospitality. He at one time owned eleven hundred acres of land in the heart of the village, his father having paid originally for some of it, a ninepence an acre. A son of this Squire Barker was a successful physician in Madison, N. Y.

It is a matter of tradition that Squire James Barker who was an intimate friend of Captain Brown urged him to come to the village and build a house next his own lot.

The Captain moved from his farm known now as "Prospect farm" into a house often spoken of as the Hinman place and opposite the site of the present hotel.

Squire Barker insisted upon making his friend a present of a building lot next to his own, and the friendly struggle ended in the erection of the elegant house. This building was up before the sawing of clapboards, and those for this house were riven as staves are split, they are of pine and it is said were all taken from one tree.

The whole place stood, when finished, a model of beauty and taste. The high rooms and wide hall are the admiration of all who enter there even at this era. Half way down the spacious hall stood in the olden time a massive side board of half circular form, upon it was always spread a silver server filled with crystal flasks in which were the different brands of fine liquors, a huge water pitcher, a sugar bowl filled with "sugar loaf," a holder containing tea spoons, and goblets, both glass and silver. Whoever called upon the Captain during the day was invited to halt at the side board, and fix for himself what pleased his fancy.

None, probably, would need the assertion of the historian to convince him that there were many who never, whatever arose, forgot to walk around to inquire after the Captain's health.

While Captain Brown seemed to accept the present of Squire Barker, the latter did not live to see the consummation for in 1796, as we have said the Squire died and subsequently Captain Brown returned the price of the lot to his children. In 1818, Squire Ezra Barker died at Pittsfield where he had gone for treatment.

In the old burying ground a tomb-stone marks the last resting place of James Barker upon which is engraved :

"Here lies the Hon. James Barker, Esq."

Probably every village in the land can boast among its inhabitants at sometime during its existence a person of original character, with natural wit, a keen sense of the humorous and ridiculous, a tact that enables him to see the weaknesses and foibles of his neighbors, and present them in a way so thoroughly good natured and bright, that all enjoy the fun save the one that is "hit," and he dare not be offended so joins in the general merriment. Such a character must have been William Brown, nephew of Captain Brown, son of Elisha Brown.

He had acquired in some way the sobriquet of "Sweet Billy," given, I think, by himself, and the jokes perpetrated by him, the quaint, queer

comments upon his neighbors, the verses composed in which the sly, half hidden doings of half a dozen years or more were brought to the surface, and thrown like a bomb shell before the public, would fill a volume if gathered together, and win for the perpetrator a fame as wide as that of Josh Billings or Nasby of the Cross Roads.

This does not come within our scope; but we cannot pass the subject without relating one or two anecdotes of "Sweet Billy."

One moonlight night just before Thanksgiving he was plodding home, wondering what the festive day would bring to him of pleasure. He had no turkeys that year, and Thanksgiving without a turkey! who ever heard of such a thing in New England?

Thus musing he passed the thrifty home of Captain Brown and lo! in the orchard by the road side, in a low growing apple tree easy to climb was a troop of turkeys, young and fat, and quite the thing.

Sweet Billy paused a minute, then giving a low whistle he pulled from his pocket a red string, which he fastened securely around the leg of the finest and best fowl; then returning to the high way he turned in at the gate, went down the yard and knocked with his walking stick at the kitchen door of Captain Brown.

The rap was quickly answered and the familiar face of the Captain appeared at the door, the tallow candle held in his hand above his head flickered in the evening wind, and sent its little ray of light down the yard and over the study frame of Sweet Billy, intent upon business.

"Come in, come in," said Captain Daniel. "Oh no," was the reply, "no, I can't come in. You ha'int got no stray turkey among your'n, have you?"

"No, I don't think so. I saw 'em when they come in to-night and there was'nt no strange one, as I see. Why?"

"Oh, I am without a Thanksgiving turkey, he must have broke his string I reckon, and got off, and I thought as how, mebbe he'd strayed along o' yours. If he should be here the feller'd have a red string, most likely, about his left leg, for I tied him with a red string."

"We can soon fix that Billy. You wait till I get the lantern and we'll go an' look at mine, they roost gen'rally out yonder in the apple trees, an' if there's one with a red string round his left leg why it's your'n, for mine ain't tied up, none on 'em."

So saying, Captain Brown lighted the lantern, and the two took their way across the yard to the orchard, where with the lantern they looked over the brood of turkeys, and soon found the "feller," tied with the red string, which Sweet Billy exhibited with triumph.



"Sure enough," exclaimed the Captain the fowl must be your'n, he is a mighty fine one say I." And Billy shouldered the turkey, and walked home, chuckling by the way. Thanksgiving came, the turkey was cooked in grand style with all the accompaniments in the way of vegetables, pumpkin pies, brown bread, etc., and soon many friends were invited to partake of the dinner, among the rest came Captain Brown and wife; after the turkey was discussed and the meal nearly finished, Sweet Billy told the story in his happiest way making quantities of fun, not only for that day, but was repeated again and again by the bar-room fire; or when a band of neighbors in merry spirits gathered on the platform before the store of a summer afternoon.

On another occasion Levi Mason who was an irascible old man, had a fine field of corn surrounding his house growing to the very door.

One night in the fall when the nights were growing chill Mr. Mason was aroused by the ding-dong-ding of a cow bell in his corn field. Springing to his feet with the expression: "There, wife, there's them pesky cows in the corn." He ran out without even drawing on a stocking, thinking to drive them out in a minute.

The night was too dark to see, and the sound of the bell was all there was to tell what part of the field the cow was browsing. One minute the bell tinkled under the window of the farm house, the next a full, deep ding-dong came from the centre of the field, and a little later way in the farthest corner a faint sound reached the ear while Uncle Levi ran hither and yon in a frantic manner, turning and doubling, as he sought to follow the sound giving vent to language more decisive than elegant as he expressed his opinion of cows in general, and that one in particular, until tired out, with patience all gone he went in to dress himself, and get his lantern. Whereupon Sweet Billy, carefully holding with his hand the clapper of the bell, stole noiselessly away. The next day he listened with demure face to Uncle Levi's story of chasing the "pesky cow," sympathized with him as he related it, and wondered with him how they got in, or how got out, but the story leaked out.

In 1821 the town voted that each family have the privilege of turning one cow giving milk into the road, and nothing more.

March 31st, 1823, Rev. Samuel Bloss left Cheshire. Revs. Elnathan Sweet, Ezekial Skinner, and Samuel Savory officiated on different Sundays. May 15, 1825, Elder Noah Y. Bushnell was called upon to preach for the First Cheshire church. He was appointed as church clerk, and for a long term of years presided over the parish.

In 1819, Elder Leland was called by the Baptist church of Pittsfield to become their pastor; but preferring a broader field and feeling conscien-

tiously that his work in the church was that of an evangelist rather than a pastor, he declined the call, although a flattering one, and remained among his friends of long years standing.

In 1825 Alpheus Smith of North Adams moved to Cheshire, and rented the tavern of Moses Wolcott; for some reason not possible to ascertain at this remote day the arrangement was short lived. In 1826 Moses and Aunt Freelove were at the helm again, and in 1827, Mr. Nathaniel Waterman entered as proprietor which place he held until 1835, when Mr. Allan Tucker from Milford near Boston took possession and was known for many years as the genial pleasing landlord. Small in stature he was lithe of limb and active, was always at hand to add to the comfort of his guests. The bar room always wore a bright and cheery look as very many of those living to-day can testify. In cool days, a bright fire of hard wood logs burned upon the hearth of the open fire place, arm chairs stood all about the nicely swept room, where the morning sun lay in bars of silvery light all the wintry morning hours, and where the villagers dropped in from time to time during the day to inquire of the news and to chat a while with the neighbors already seated around the bright fire. These old fashioned inns by the way-side were an institution that passed from existence when the era of steam dawned, went out with the stages. They, perhaps, might be voted slow by the rising generation, but they were at least, marvelously cozy and homelike, and neighbors sitting there to discuss the crops, the news, politics, the latest act of Congress—did not necessarily go home in a state of intoxication.

Flax in its cultivation, and various manipulations necessary to be gone over before it appeared—yards of snowy linen, was a great industry. When ripe it was cut and the seeds thoroughly pounded from it. Then it was laid upon the grass, and left beneath the sun and the showers until completely rotted, turned now and then while undergoing the decaying process, and when taken up pounded again with a mallet until the fibres were perfectly pliable then hatchelled, a hatchel being a brush with iron teeth. Some were coarse, some were fine and the design was to divide the flax from the tow. This step finished, the flax was carded or combed with a carding-comb, an instrument similar to that used by horse fanciers to comb the manes of their horses. The fibres at this stage were wound upon the distaff off from which they were spun into thread upon what was called the "Little Wheel," and finally were woven into cloth of various devices and patterns, table cloths, toweling, napkins, sheets, pillow cases, curtains, etc. One yard of cotton was obtained for two of the fairest strongest linen, woven so deftly and well that many a Cheshire house wife brings out to-day, a long, snowy table cloth from the recess of some choice drawer, saying:

I am going to lay my table for you to-night with a cloth spun and woven by Aunt Polly, Aunt Chloe or Betsey, as the name chanced to be.

During this decade Daniel Chapman established himself in Cheshire. He lived first in a red farm house just beyond Scrabble Town, owned and rented at the halves for a great many years by Moses Wolcott. Mr. Chapman then bought the farm above the Whitford Rocks, which remained in the family for a long term of years. His father lived with him, already an old man and one who had a history. His home, when a young man, was New London, Conn.

He had a wife and two boys. One day when on the wharf he was kidnapped and compelled to enlist on board one of His Majesty's ships that lay at anchor in the offing. In vain he told of the wife who would wait long for his coming, and plead that he might go home to bid his boys good bye. He was hurried away in a boat, and the ship cast anchor, and put out to sea. For three years he was held in this forced service. Twice he passed within sight of his own home, but was permitted to give no sign of his presence. It so happened, one day, that he was sent on land to a mill for some supplies. In the miller he found a friend who provided him with a horse, and a boy and said:

"Go, mount this horse, ride rapidly for ten miles, send back the boy and make your way to your home and friends." Chapman needed no second invitation, and leaped over the ground. His wife had long e're this given up the idea of his being alive. She had broken up the home, bound out her boys, and was making an effort for self support. Her surprise and joy at his appearance can scarcely be described.

They took the boys and went up to Great Barrington. After a few years they made a home in Windsor, until at this period, they crossed over into Cheshire.

A son of each of these boys lives in Cheshire, Stephen Chapman buying his present home on Main street, in 1855, and Mason Chapman some years later (1858) became a resident.

## CHAPTER VII.

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FROM 1827—1837.

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VILLAGE HOMES. LAND DEVELOPED. METHODISM. UNION OF THIRD CHESHIRE AND ELDER SWEET'S CHURCH. DEATH OF DEACON DANIEL COMAN. R. C. BROWN. DR. L. J. COLE. SCHOOLS. MANNERS AND CUSTOMS. ANN REXFORD.

Of all the proverbs that have come down through the generations there is none truer than that which runs, "Distance lends enchantment to the view." Looking at history through the arches of distance it is surrounded with a romance wholly irresistible to most minds.

One follows with keen delight the brave pioneer as he leaves his home to wander through the wilderness, and journeys with him as he plunges deeper and deeper into the ancient forests, ever retiring before the civilization he heralds. It is a curious, charming life he lives, this frontier life in a new settlement; when lived a hundred years behind the actors; when the wolves and the catamounts are all hunted from the woods—in short when it is lived in a comfortable parlor, rather than in the wintry days that felled the forest trees, or in the tough experiences and hardships of every hour.

This township of Cheshire, in that part where the hamlet of the "Corners" Centre, was made up of meadow and upland. The first settlers located along the margin of the meadows, and back on the low, rising upland.

The roads were, by this era, beginning to be kept in good repair. They were smooth, hard, and those that run up and down the valley were free from steep hills, lined with pleasant village homes, and now and then a substantial farm house. Of course, in the very necessity of things, there would be, here and there, a hill to climb but as the pioneers became way-wise they circled their hills oftener than they went over the summit with their roads.

Rural felicity smiled on every hand, and people going down country to visit carried such flattering reports of the Berkshire settlement and its possibilities that more of the Rhode Island people resolved to come up hither.

Eli Green had put up a row of houses on the hill this side of the burying ground, all of which were occupied.

Widow Read, the widow of a sea captain, and her daughter, Sally Heath, lived in the house at the foot of the hill coming down from the church. This house is one of the venerable ones, going back to the first days to the very beginning of things.

This house, to which they came from Rhode Island, and where they lived always, was embowered in rose bushes. Beds of clove and June pinks lined the garden walks, and filled the summer air with their musky odor, a wicket gate opened at the west from the street, and a narrow path led by clumps of Southernwood and Rhode Island flowers up to the western door, where Grannie Read used to sit and knit her lamb's wool stockings.

In this house, or beneath its door stone, the legend runs, a pot of gold lies buried, placed there by the wonderful Capt. Kidd. When forced to leave the land and find a home on the rolling deep, 'tis said, he hastily digged a hole for his treasure of gold and silver and concealed it, expecting to return at no very distant day.

One morning in that far off time some strange gentlemen appeared at the door begging the privilege of digging for this legendary gold, but Capt. Read positively denied the request, professing to have no faith in the tale. Whether armed with pick axe and lantern, the Captain tried it himself at the witching hour of night or not there is no record, neither is the truth known whether beneath the tottering steps the pot of gold still waits for some lucky digger, or has been unearthed in the past.

In 1832, sand was developed on the present farm of Elisha Prince. Major Joy of Hawley, took the contract to draw the sand to Keene, New Hampshire.

In 1823 an interest in Methodism was awakened in this vicinity. Elder Davis came to Cheshire, preached at different houses, at school houses and occasionally in the Baptist Meeting House which at this time was occupied jointly by Elders Leland and Sweet and their flocks.

There were many converts, some among them who had been awakened in years gone by, but had never joined any church. Some who had been baptized by Elder Leland, and not considered it necessary to associate themselves with God's people; these were now gathered in and swelled the numbers of the Methodists. Perhaps, a little to the annoyance of Elder Leland, possibly not, it is told of him, however, that meeting one of his early friends, and continued admirers, but one whom he had baptized and allowed to go unsealed by church admission, and who had now joined the followers of Elder Davis, he said to her :

“Well, my friend, you were *my* chicken—you are *Davis'* pullet—and *whose* old hen you will be remains with the future.”

Following Elder Davis came Elder Mac, then Elder Pratt who lived in the gambrel roofed house, and eked out the small salary that the Methodists were able to pay by working on week days.

After a time one Peter Gates an itinerant minister wandered into Cheshire and preached often, usually in the school house. He talked long, was dull, and made himself obnoxious to the boys, up and growing. Boys, some of them, whose parents insisted upon their attending the meetings.

Peter Gates attached himself to the family of Elder Pratt and took up his abode at the gambrel roofed house where he ate and slept, and lived, save when he went out to preach. The boys held a consultation and decided that it was all wrong for Peter Gates to board and lodge any longer with Elder Pratt, so they formed themselves into a committee of ways and means to devise some plan by which to rid the town of Gates. One warm, fall night when Gates had gone to his room to retire and left his chamber window open, the boys stole over the hill at the rear of the house, and took a position above the low windows, then in deep tones one of them called. "Peter—Pe-ter—Pe-t-e-r Gates, Peter Gates." The preacher heard the voice in the darkness, and being a trifle given to superstition, he leaped from his bed, went to the open window and throwing himself upon his knees, with clasped hands and upturned eyes he cried: "Here am I. What wilt thou Lord?" When the wicked boys, overjoyed at the success of their plot, exclaimed:

"Go, Peter. Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel."

Elder Gates believed the call was genuine, and so reported it to Elder Pratt in the morning, who, nothing loth to be rid of so unprofitable a boarder, advised him by all means to go, and the boys were troubled no more with Minister Gates.

In 1827 there was quite an addition to the different churches.

In 1832 an association was founded at Stephentown. The Third Cheshire Church sent as delegates to this association, Elder Leland and Elder John Vincent, with the power delegated to them to join the association if they deemed such a move a wise one.

Upon listening to the creed offered by this body they gathered that it would occupy the time at its sessions in religious worship and preaching, would oppose benevolent societies of all kinds, and not take up with missionary work. Therefore they joined the Stephentown Association with the understanding that when they chose to do so they could be at liberty to leave the association and go on alone as they had been doing heretofore.

In 1833 the same delegates were sent by the Third Church to the association they joined the previous year, and which met at Canaan, N. Y. Quite to the surprise of these delegates they found that the Stephentown,

like the Shaftsbury Association, had adopted work in behalf of missionary and benevolent societies, which they so bitterly opposed.

Declaring that the Third Cheshire Church was not so ready to be attracted by every "So here," and "So there," but rather, would follow the Bible, they would have recanted, and left the association had not other circumstances arisen that changed the relation of the churches.

During the spring of 1834, both, Elder Leland and his wife, were subjects of a peculiar influence concerning the division in the church. Great results follow from the smallest beginnings, from a single grain of wheat whole harvests grow. Lafitte, the poor French boy, "tattered and torn," picked up a pin, and became the richest man in the realm.

One day of this same spring, 1834, a crowd was gathered in the meeting house. Both churches were present with their respective ministers—Elder Rogers from Berlin was in the high pulpit to offer the opening prayer. A devout man, ever intent upon his master's work, but somewhat prosy at times. That morning, however, he had a divine mission to perform, and the words fell from his lips in prayer as though shaped within the very courts of Heaven. But few, who listened to them, and witnessed the effect they had upon the great congregation, doubted that they were, and one old man sprang to his feet (as the voice of the preacher died away down the aisles) exclaiming while the tears rolled along his furrowed face: "There are two men in this house to-day who could settle that whole trouble in five minutes." No one needed to be told that the two were Elder Leland and Elder Sweet. The next morning sun saw Elder Leland in the Belchertown wagon, so familiar on the roads in this vicinity, on his way to the different houses of his own church members, to whom he confided his wishes. Soon a meeting was called, where it was proposed to arrange some plan of settlement, and the following was presented by Elder Leland:

Cheshire, March 6th, 1834.

This day the Second and Third (or as some say the Third and Elder Sweet's church) in Cheshire unite together to be called hereafter the Third church upon the following plan of agreement, viz:

"All former differences shall be buried in the sea of universal forgiveness, and all the members of both churches whether present or absent shall be considered in the union under the following provision: Any member here present who from local situation or any other cause may decline the union shall be subject to no censure therefor. Those members who are not present shall have the same indulgence when they make their requests known. In both cases the non-unionists shall be under no obligation to tell the reason why. A clerk shall be chosen in whose office the books and papers of both the former churches shall be deposited merely for information; but shall not be appealed to for rules of proceeding. A new book shall be procured in which the proceedings of the church hereafter shall be registered."

After it was discussed and agreed that they were to come together on

the basis of universal forgiveness and mutual oblivion of the past without any questions asked or reasons given, those who were willing to accede to it declared themselves members of the new church. Many never walked again with that church, but when the Universalist movement reached Cheshire we find the names of their descendants among the leaders of that church and its supporters, and others never took up their connection with the visible church of God again.

The duty of the historian is to gather and state facts—not to give opinions. The facts of this unfortunate church division are on the pages of this simple history as we have gathered them by much patient research, and we will close the story with this decade by a somewhat significant statement that we find recorded by one of the old members:

“And so, this most remarkable event that has transpired in our church history ends at last, and the churches are one again. ’Tis true more than one half of the dissenting members have left this world, and some have refused to return; but those that are living and have returned are *very friendly to Elder Leland*. The lapse of time that has rolled between the first breaking out of that unhappy discord, and the times we are now speaking of has had a tendency to smother the unpleasant feelings which have been so long in existence.”

One church belonged to the Stephentown Association, one to the Shaftsbury—therefore the connection with each was annulled, and the Cheshire Third church went on for a number of years an independent institution.

Elder Sweet was retained as pastor during the remainder of 1834. In 1835 he was dismissed and the pulpit was supplied by Elder Leland, Elder Sweet, and Elder Vincent in turn. For several successive years the church was at rather a low tide. The members were much diminished by death, removal, and the disaffections, while no additions were reported.

In January, 1839, a great loss was sustained to both town and church by the death of Deacon Daniel Coman at the age of 86. He was appointed deacon at an early age and held the office through all the years, until blindness and failing health unfitted him for its duties when he resigned, and a little later went calmly from this life to that other, parted by such a narrow tide, yesterday a man among men—to-day a spirit gone.

In 1828 Pardon Lincoln was appointed clerk of the Stafford’s Hill church, and with N. Y. Bushnell as pastor it went quietly on its way for many years.

L. J. Cole a young physician who had graduated at the far famed Medical Institution of Fairfield, Herkimer Co., N. Y., came to Lanesborough where for a year he practised with Dr. Tyler a well established physician. At the close of 1828 Dr. Cole came over to Cheshire and began the practise of medicine on his own responsibility. He married the sister of R. C. Brown and lived in the house on the hill owned by Russell Brown.



In 1833 he moved into the house which has been the homestead associated with his name and practice for more than fifty years, and which instead of going down hill under the tooth of time has reversed the order of things, and seems pleasanter, stronger and in better repair than when it stood upon the quiet street fresh in all of its original glory, better rather than worse, for the fifty years the almanac declares have rolled over its roof, and the four generations that may be gathered within its walls.

In 1833 R. C. Brown entered business in company with Dr. L. J. Cole, occupying the building of Moses Wolcott at the end of the tavern, and keeping there a country store. In 1835 R. C. Brown was appointed postmaster. In 1837 the building across the street was put up by L. H. Brown. The upper rooms occupied as a residence, and the lower was filled with dry goods and groceries by A. J. Mason and L. H. Brown.

In November 1834 at a church meeting held by the members of the Third church, they vote to provide wood for the meeting-house during the ensuing winter.

The stoves were long box stoves, with pipes extending the entire length of the audience room to the chimney in the rear, with bright tin pails wired on, where the elbows turned, to prevent the dripping upon the seats below.

Schools were well developed by this epoch, and that held in the brick school house numbered one hundred scholars on its roll call. Upon the low seats in these years was an unbroken row of little ones in every stage of a-b-c and a-b-ab literature. The girls on one side, the boys on the other. Directly back of these were the two and three syllable children who were formed in classes for spelling, the last exercise before four o'clock in the afternoon. Filing down the aisles from the back and middle seats, they stood in a row along a crack in the floor. The scholar that could reach the head of the class and hold it until Friday night received a merit mark.

The boys wore roundabouts, and went barefoot summer days, the girls wore dresses of good length with pantalettes to match, or when clad in holiday attire white ones. These were starched and were tied on with the stocking coming to the heel of the shoe. The hair was brushed from the face, parted in the middle, braided in two long cues which were securely fastened by bright ribbons.

At recess the girls played on the common in the deep shadow cast by the old church. There they built their play houses of stones, and smooth white pebbles gathered by the brookside, and filled them with broken bits of pretty china treasured next to their marvellous dolls which were usually manufactured of cloth, not unlike a cob in form, with little rolls of cotton sewed on for arms and legs, and the most striking features painted or drawn with a pen upon the face.

Children in those days knew but little of books and toys. Indeed, the world itself knew but little of the thousands and thousands of devices for the amusement of children that the years have developed. So they played, happy as happy could be with their dolls and broken china, arranged their shining pebbles, and told fortunes with buttercups and daisies: "Lawyer, Doctor, Farmer, Beggarman, Thief." What girl was there that did not wait with breathless anxiety, as she listened to her fortune foretold by the daisy chains, and turned away with a half sigh if the expected lover coming through the green lanes to kiss the lily white hand proved to be a beggar or a thief.

One verse that was current at quite an early date, was set to music and the names changed to suit the neighborhood. It ran like this :

"Peggy Ingram, Peggy Ingram, where have you been ?  
Over to Farnum's and back again,  
Peggy Ingram, Peggy Ingram who did you see ?  
Oh! I saw War-ni-er and Ma-ri-e."

In an era when a new book, a new toy, or a new song was a thing to be talked about and treasured for a lifetime, one can see how the simple home ballads would be changed to suit the day, and the circumstances that would arise. We have spoken only of the girls at recess in the days of the old brick school house. There was as well a troop of merry, frolicsome boys, some grand ones, and although they doted on plaguing the girls, hung their dolls in a row by the neck, and tore the play houses down, leaving them a heap of hopeless ruins, that was mischief that they could not help. They made the paths in winter, drew the girls on their sleds, let them shoot at a mark with their cross guns, and gave them the rosiest half of their apples.

Steel pens were an invention of the future, one's education was not finished until a first-class pen could be made of a goose quill. Envelopes had never been dreamed of, and letters were adroitly folded so as to bring the fourth page always left blank, in the right shape for the address on the back, and for the sealing with a wafer or wax on the opposite side.

In 1832, Moses Wolcott was Justice of the Peace. In 1833, Ann Rexford a Christian woman, who had prepared herself for the ministry, under the auspices of the Christian Denomination, appeared at Cheshire. She drew quite large audiences to whom she preached acceptably, but she met her fate here and married while in the midst of her success and usefulness the Hon. Russell Brown. A lady of polished manners and much beauty, it was fortunate for Cheshire to gain her society, and to its circle add the pleasant home of which she was mistress.

Dennis Meehan, was the only Irishman for many years. He lived in the

cheese house below the tavern of Moses Wolcott with his large family.

When the town voted not to pay the selectmen for their services, they were not remunerated. Sometimes they voted to pay them \$10.

The residence built in 1815 by Moses Reed, and occupied by Dr. L. J. Cole, was until 1840 the last dwelling on Main street toward the East, until the bridge over the Hoosac was passed.

On the right of the road, beyond the bridge, with its "antique porch," its rustic summer house, and clump of lilac bushes, stood the house of Mrs. Betsy Brown. The building is still there, but greatly changed from the cheery home of fifty years ago. Just such a weather stained wooden house as we see every day among the hills, and along the country lanes of this town. Sad, lonely thoughts they arouse too. The history of a town is told, next to its people in its houses. To those who can remember these old houses when they were the homes of some one they loved how many a tale is written in the little window panes, in the doorways, recorded on the moss grown roof and stamped upon the threshold and door stone. They can remember some summer evening of the long ago when the curling smoke of the chimney showed the preparation for the evening meal, the line of loitering cows coming up through the lanes from the pasture, the men with their horses, or perhaps a load of new made hay, moving towards the barn, the fields dotted and fringed with trees stretching up to the forest crowned hills; the children shouting and laughing on every side, and the horn blown from the door by the housewife calling to the supper ready in the neat, pleasant kitchen. But it is all over now, the little children who played and shouted through its rooms in their springtide and the old men who hobbled from its doors in their falltime, are there no more, deserted entirely or occupied now and then by strangers, they stand ready to fall to the ground with nothing but decay written on their fronts, the saddest sight that meets one mid the New England hills, telling silently of the young and the strong gone out from the parent state, with brave hearts, and willing hands to till the Western prairies, and help build up the towns that grow like magic in that wonderful new world.

## CHAPTER VIII.

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FROM 1837—1847.

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DEATH OF CAPTAIN DANIEL BROWN. J. B. DEAN. WM. WATERMAN. E. D. FOSTER. SCHOOL DISTRICT LIBRARY. RUSSELL BROWN. FARM LIFE. RAILROAD. IRISH EMIGRATION. METHODIST CHURCH ESTABLISHED. UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY ESTABLISHED. DEATH OF ELDER LELAND. FAMILY BURYING GROUNDS. ORDINANCE OF BAPTISM. CULTIVATION OF SILK WORMS. R. M. COLE & CO. SAW-MILLS. OTHER INDUSTRIES. DR. A. J. BLISS.

Cheshire at this epoch stands out a picturesque village of Berkshire, no longer new and legendless, but with a character of its own, not growing and racing, to be sure, like a Western town, but with a finished air, a mature dignity with a back ground of colonial life, and a revolutionary history. Settled in its ways and habits its days moved on in calm content. The silvery *Ashucwillicook* of the Indians stretching through the green country, turned its busy wheels and noisy looms, as it ran from town to town. The school house stood in each district of the Berkshire hills. The results of systematic labor showed from side to side and from end to end of the valley, a beautiful landscape won from the wilderness by every day toil. And away at the east, looked down upon this valley, Stafford's Hill, a name that stands out with breezy prominence upon the history of Cheshire, and where at this period the church spire still tells its benign story, and the marbles below whisper of this and that distinguished man who died at New Providence Hill—write its name ever in capitals—for it lights up the story of that little Revolutionary army who foot sore and weary returned along the narrow, hilly road from the camp at Saint Croix, and the fight at Bennington.

The church laws which were tainted with an intolerance not far behind some made by the Puritans, and which were fought so strenuously by Elder Leland were a dead letter at this period and every one did in very truth worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience.

The links that bind the history of this town, and its people to the past are somewhat obscure from the neglect into which they had fallen; but

although hidden by the rust of years there is not a church, or a school—not an industry or a mill, scarcely a road, a farm, or a workshop that has not come to the surface in its first offset, beneath the vigorous search made for this history, but the half has not been told neither can it be told here. It is rich in old time memories, and local incidents, emphasized by many an ancient house, and many a narrative, during the first eighty years of the town's existence.

In 1839 the road along the Hoosac river was built. A Mr. Erastus Beech who figured as a surveyor and builder of roads took the contract of the whole job from Adams to Pittsfield. Mr. Benjamin Whipple contracted for the portion running through the town of Cheshire.

Avoiding the hills, it followed the river valley, leaving the old road at the left when driving up the river from Pittsfield. Much improvement was made by this route, the road is nearly level nor is the distance materially increased. A cross road here and there connects the two highways and they unite just below the village of Cheshire.

In 1840 Cheshire mourned the death of Captain Daniel Brown whose name had been associated with that of the town for so many years. They carried him through the street, over the hill to the church where a crowd of sad looking farmers and village neighbors gathered by the bier on the green he had given to the town. A band of friends to whom he had been a benefactor brushed away the rising tear as they followed silently and with bared heads to the burying ground.

And the family went back to the home built for them by the departed. A home in which children and children's children had grown up—gone out for forays in the great world, and returned to its friendly halls again, where they had gathered for the bridal, for birthday and holiday festivals, where old age, thoughtful manhood and joyous childhood had mingled, where death had crossed the threshold the bier waited at the door, and where now Aunt Chloe lived in widowhood for some years.

Some new business firms were inaugurated during this era. April 1st, 1841 James B. Dean and William G. Waterman formed a partnership in the mercantile business occupying the store builded by Luther H. Brown and remaining together until 1844.

In 1845 E. D. Foster and W. G. Waterman joining their fortunes went into the same line of business in a store that they fitted up opposite the residence of Captain Brown, and here Mr. Foster was librarian of the School District Library just established, and the first ever organized in the place. Although not large in the number of volumes on its shelves, some excellent works filled its lists. Books did not lie in such rich profusion upon the tables of every parlor as they have done since, and children could

not have a new one as quick as they finished the old. Every Saturday afternoon at one o'clock the doors were thrown open, and old and young but especially the young filed into the store in order to exchange their book.

In 1844 J. B. Dean opened a store for himself in the Wolcott building, exchanging sites with R. C. Brown who crossing the street took with him the Post-Office and established, in the building vacated by Dean & Waterman, that mercantile house that stood for so long a term of years, and was so extensively known in this vicinity.

R. C. Brown and L. J. Cole dissolved partnership in 1838. After which time the latter devoted himself entirely to his profession, riding over the hills and mountains, up and down the valley roads, visiting the sick and speaking words of consolation to the dying, through the slush and storms of winter, and the heated summer weather, year in and year out, until his stately form, and strong and cheery voice came to be as familiar, as well known as the elms that dot the shady homestead meadows, or the brooks that tumble down the mountain sides.

As straws show which way the the winds blow, the following anecdote tells of the impression left by this disciple of *Æsculapius* upon the minds of those to whom he ministered :

Traveling once in one of the western states, as he came from a public dining room, where he had taken dinner with a companion, he was accosted by a stranger saying,

"Please sir, is your name Dr. Cole, and are you from Cheshire, Mass ?

Looking with wondering eyes upon his questioner the doctor replied in the affirmative, when the man went on :

"Well ! well ! There was an engineer here a few minutes ago who heard you talk, and wanted to wait until you came from the dining hall so that he might see you. He said he knew that voice, says he, 'I've not heard that man speak or seen him for twenty-five years, but I'd bet any amount that it's Dr. Cole from Cheshire. He doctored me when I had fever twenty-five years ago, and I'll never forget that voice.' His bell rang and he had to go, so I said I'd ask you," explained the stranger evidently highly gratified at the result of his questioning. Dr. Mason Brown died during this decade, leaving Dr. Cole the sole physician in town. After a year of business at the low store of the Wolcott's, in 1845, J. B. Dean rented that belonging to Russell Brown on the hill. Soon after Mr. Brown built his fine dwelling house on the brow of the hill beyond. An elegant home for the country in those days, and a house which was much canvassed while in process of structure, as many points in its arrangement were new, and of a type used by city people. Parlors furnished in bright colors of plush, and located on the second floor, were much in vogue, door bells that rang in the

kitchen, convenient to Bridget or Mary Ann, were used in place of the old fashioned brass knocker, as well as transoms over the front hall door through which the light of a lamp, suspended from the hall ceiling, and shaded by a globe of red or yellow, streamed out upon the marble steps and door yard flagging. Many of these improvements were adopted by Mrs. Brown, who being more than ordinarily fond of flowers, also planned her yards and grounds after models in advance of the village gardens, so when the house with its surroundings stood complete it was an ornament to the village and the admiration of the people.

And now for a time everything moved on quietly and without change, Cheshire fell into a sort of a Rip VanWinkle nap, like that many another town has taken.

The stores mentioned were amply sufficient to supply the needs of people on all the outlying farms. The cheeses were made by farmer's wives in the dairy houses, through which the cool streams were carried in pipes, and where the huge tubs stood that received the milk at night and in the morning, as it was taken from the milking yard in the flowing pails by the milkers. The farmers then knew nothing of factories, creameries and the thousand and one improvements of to-day. Their cheeses, however, were fine and brought a good price at the market place. No oleomargarine entered into their butter. They gathered the crops of hay and grain into great brown barns fragrant with the odor from their mows and deep bays, where the cattle tossed their horns from the stanchion rows, not Jerseys or Alderneys, but good substantial breeds that were preferred in those days of patriotism, to any that had cropped English daisies or had been reared where English clover cast its purple bloom over heath and lea. From these same barns in the early morning, chanticleer rang out his clarion call, and led forth his harem of good old-fashioned, yellow-legged and speckled fowl, with never a Shanghai or Plymouth Rock.

The farmer's wife lived a busy, but a cheerful, happy life. When her cheese was in the press, her dinner for the family and hired man was over, and her kitchen tided and put in order, on some pleasant afternoon in warm weather she arrayed herself in a pretty dress of print or lawn, made with gored skirt, and sleeves that were tight from the elbow to the wrist, but above the elbow were constructed to puff out to their utmost capacities. The effect was obtained either by starching an under and distinct pair of sleeves very stiff, or by stuffing the upper part with feathers. A soft handkerchief of whitest mull was crossed over the breast, a cap with ruffles fluted about the face, and a long apron of black silk tied around the waist completed the attire. A long pocket-bag in which was carried the knitting work of lambs' wool, the knitting sheath, a handkerchief, and often the snuff box, was

taken on the arm, a green calash put upon the head, and walking leisurely along the footpath, sometimes across the pasture or meadow, she went to visit and take tea with a neighbor.

No invitation was given, none was required, every housewife held herself in readiness for such an invasion upon her tea table. A hearty welcome was always expected and rarely or never failed.

The neat sanded parlor or "keeping room" was thrown open and sitting together these two chatted, as they knit, of the news, the doings at the corner, the church and its interests, who were married, who were sick, the last price for butter, and so on. They visited the flower and vegetable beds in the thrifty garden, looked at the cheese, the last piece of carpet in the loom, talked of the colors, which were fast, and those which might fade, examined the pieces of homespun flax and wool, exchanged the last new receipts for pickles or preserves, then sitting by the little round table in the bright, clean kitchen they drank their cup of refreshing "Hyson" before the "menfolks" came up from the half acre lot. After this the last pinch of snuff was taken, or perchance the last pipe smoked in company, and knitting into the seam needle, the visitor rolled up her work, and returning through the pasture with its dappled shadows lying long upon the grass reached her doorstep at sundown.

This was the simple way of paying visits three quarters of a century ago. The lives of the "forefathers of the hamlet" were uneventful and free from excitement, they were, however, lives of sterling worth, and the people were gradually approaching an era that brought them a fresh influx, and gave to them and to their mountain town a new impulse.

In 1846 the railroad from Pittsfield to North Adams was constructed. The yellow and red stage coaches dashing over the bridge and up the street, the blast of the driver's horn, and the fresh relay of horses brought in hot haste from the long sheds, that have tumbled down long ago, were soon to become a memory, while in their stead the whistle of the locomotive sounded up and down the narrow valley.

In the fall of 1846 the first train went through, to the delight of an eager crowd, who had either taken passage for the round trip, or who had gathered at the corners to see "the thing" go through. It was a great event in the annals of "Our Town," and changed it from a sleepy hamlet to a busy village.

A few houses had been built prior to the laying of the track. Mr. Henry Brown built in 1843 the house occupied in later years by Stephen Harkness, and that in which Mr. Harrison Brown lives he put up at, or about the same time. The depot was erected, Depot street surveyed and laid out, while houses began to dot the fields in various directions.



Cheshire had never been a point of immigration for foreigners until the work offered by the laying of the track brought flocks of them, almost entirely of the Irish nationality. Little shanties with thatched roofs went up rapidly along the roadsides, or what they preferred, by the track, where they "squatted" on a little patch of ground, planted some potatoes, built the proverbial pig-pen, added a lean-to at the rear of the shanty which accommodated a cow and some chickens. Pigs, children and chickens were often seen playing together by the low door, and sharing the same bowl of milk. Frequently a long line of these shanties were erected until the surroundings bore the air of a young town from Cork.

Times have materially changed for these people since that day. With the advent of the engine they came, and have been steadily on the increase through the years. They have gotten acclimated and become way-wise. On the mountain slopes, among the charcoal burners, or where the clearings were made, the smoke of their chimneys arose in the clear air, or fell fluttering along the hill-tops when it was heavy, like a white ribbon. When the sun was low and their toil ended for the day they went to their homes, poor and plain doubtless, with sun-browned cheeks and hands hardened by toil; but as a rule frugal and industrious choosing, that narrow path that leads step by step to successful issue.

At the end of the forty years—among these men are some of our substantial farmers and worthy citizens. In our school rooms we meet the daughters of Erin side by side with our own, holding equal positions both as teachers and scholars. The Marys and Bridgets have taken the places of the Betsys and Sallys of yore in the New England kitchens, and among our brightest girls.

Breaking up their lines, crossing the Atlantic, the experience is a deep one, and produces a radical change in the habits of their lives, which not only remains upon all their future, but stamps itself upon that of those who are yet to follow.

But, however great the change in manners of association, of dress, or of character, whenever the Irishman goes in his journeyings, in the country, the town, on the Mississippi, or beyond the Rockies, he carries with him—whatever else betide—his own religion with all of its sublime mysteries which adds a hidden, but to him a very real charm to all the wonders he beholds in the new country.

For many years these foreign people were forced to go to Pittsfield or Adams to attend religious services, and when friends were dead the survivors carried them, through the weather, however inclement, to the consecrated burial ground of their own church. So it was that they began to agitate the subject of forming a church in Cheshire.

The trains on the new railroad ran regularly, but the business in the beginning was not sufficient to warrant very many trains during the day. One down in the morning and up in the evening accommodated the traveling public wonderfully well, and was an improvement upon driving in a cold bleak day over the hills to Pittsfield, or down the valley to North Adams.

Passengers and freight cars were made up together, making the same run carrying the invoices of sand, iron, flour, meal and goods for the various stores, at the same time with the passengers. Many will be able to recall how exceedingly slow the progress that was made, and the half hour consumed in taking on and throwing off freight at the different stations, while the passengers waited—patiently. It would require no wonderful stretch of imagination to picture the howling that would accompany such a proceeding to-day. Mr. J. M. Bliss was the first depot agent, and was succeeded by Daniel Lowe.

In 1840 R. M. Cole entered the store on the hill as active partner, the business taking the firm name of R. M. Cole. This house of business built in 1806, holding the first post-office, has come down occupied as a place of business through all the years of the town's existence, and is the oldest place and the only one that dates back almost to the beginning without change of form; built with the gable end to the street, rising three stories, it overlooks the village by day, and at night the lights twinkle from the windows a landmark to one approaching the village. In good condition this building still stands firm, and if no cyclone touches it, or fire kindles its frame the prospects are promising that it may witness the advent of another century.

In 1840 Luther H. Brown managed a saw-mill that stood upon the ground now occupied by the sand bed of J. B. Dean, which he afterward sold to Thomas Olin. Peter Dooley and Dennis Meehan, also, were lumbering at the Notch, cutting trees on the mountain. They were when chopped the proper length slid down the mountain side in a long trough constructed for the purpose, and which landed the logs at a point where they could easily be hauled to the mills. Peter Dooley was one of the representative men of Cheshire. Strong in his business he always found followers. He was interested in several lime kilns which were in active operation and which with the saw-mills and burning of charcoal on the mountains afforded employment for many men.

During this decade a new departure in the medical life of Cheshire took place. The Thompsonian practice sprung up and was well patronized in the vicinity. Physicians from other towns came in and served the families who imbibed the theory. Hemlock boughs were carried from the forest by the quantity and patients were steamed and toasted underneath feather beds and

piles of coverlids, were it August or December. However, as health was the object sought, when it was found it mattered but little how. Dr. A. G. Bliss, son of Orrin Bliss, studied this school of medicine and located at Cheshire.

In 1840 Daniel Brown, grandson of Captain Brown put up a saw-mill and blacksmith shop on the site of the Old Crown Glass Company.

In 1841 while Elder Rogers of Berlin, was preaching for the Baptist people, they were overwhelmed with grief at the death of Elder John Leland. For so many years they had looked upon him as their guide and pattern, had loved him with a love amounting almost to idolatry, and now he was taken from them without one note of warning. He left Cheshire in the winter of that year to attend a meeting held at North Adams, where he expected to preach. He was in his usual health and customary good spirits. After the service in the evening he returned to the house of a friend with whom he was stopping, and was taken during the night violently ill, an illness which terminated fatally within a few days. The day was a gray cold one of January. They brought their friend, a friend held in saintly reverence all through this vicinity, over the bare and frozen roads from Adams. The old church was crowded, packed with the throng that gathered to pay the last rites to the dead. They had assembled at the appointed hour, but the way was long, the roads were tedious, and the procession winding around the rough country hills made slow progress. All the morning the sad faced congregation waited. Sometimes one would rise walk out upon the steps and look over the hills toward the north, then slowly returning to his pew wipe away the tear, and with bowed head wait wearily and in silence. At length the bell high up in the belfry tower commenced its dreary toll. Some one struck up, in a clear, sweet voice, a hymn familiar to all, and in which the pastor had so often joined, and the words were taken up from all points in the church, in gallery and pew they sounded a sad requiem for the pastor who was coming up the steps, through the aisle to the pulpit for the last time.

In 1845 Elder William Loomis became the pastor, a hasty, nervous temperament, but eager and interested in his work. In 1846 he was replaced for Elder Platt Bets. In 1847 the services of Rev. Henry Clarke of Pittsfield, were secured. Elder Clarke was a scholarly man, educated in Eastern Massachusetts, he brought a breeze from the outside world, and aroused the church to a broader and better platform of action than it had hitherto known.

The church which was built with so much pride in 1793, was getting old and dilapidated. During the winter of 1847-8 quite an extensive revival of religion blessed the labors of Elder Clarke. Many were added to the church of both young and old, and it seemed more flourishing than it had for many years. At the little hollow among the hills, whose peculiar shape

together with the proverbial industry of its inhabitants won for it the name of "The Kitchen," in the early days, flows a clear and pretty stream. A rustic bridge spans the road, a dam built for the use of the saw-mill, grist-mill, and tannery caused the water to form a deep pool near the street and below the bridge. This spot had been singled out from time immemorial as the best place afforded for the administration of the ordinance of baptism by immersion. Whatever may have been the religious faith of a person, I cannot avoid the feeling that any one who ever witnessed this ordinance on a summer Sunday morning upon the banks of this brook will always remember the impressive beauty of the scene. The eager respectful crowd on the farther shore and bridge above; the dark robed form of the preacher slowly approaching, followed by the disciples, and their friends; the few short words of prayer, those of holy consecration, ere he descended into the water: "In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost;" the gentle plash beneath the clear liquid; the rising to newness of life as the triumphant hymn swells on the breeze welcoming one more to the fold. Who can forget the scene?

Among the industries carried on during this decade was an amateur one, too interesting to pass by unnoticed: the rearing of silk-worms, and the weaving of silk. Mrs. Patience Whitmarsh was the leader in this work. She grew her own mulberry trees in the yard by the house where the wayside smithy blazed, and the low stone wall grew wild with vines and blossoms. She procured the eggs for raising her first crop of worms, built benches around the room devoted to the work, and under the proper temperature they were developed through five stages at which time they wound themselves into the silken cocoon. At regular intervals the little things were fed by covering them thickly with mulberry leaves under which they could be heard greedily devouring their food.

The butterfly was not allowed to pierce the cocoon only in few cases, sufficient for future breeding, all others were at the proper time thrown into hot water, after which the fine threads of silk were spooled, and spun, and woven into such fabrics as the manufacturer desired.

Mrs. Whitmarsh worked under disadvantages, and probably did not grow rich in the enterprise, as she had only a common loom to work in, and common wheels to spin the infinitesimal threads, however there are a number of articles still carefully treasured by her children as her handiwork in this wonderfully interesting occupation. A fancy work exceeding the crazy quilt departure of this generation.

In 1843 Allan Tucker removed to Pittsfield and Gilbert Dresser took the hotel at Cheshire. He was an energetic man, and after the building of the railroad always run a cab between the hotel and depot, taking passengers

and baggage to any point desired. There has never been so good a system for conveying passengers in the village as that inaugurated by Gilbert Dresser.

The Methodist society, which had been formed in Cheshire in 1823, had grown cool and dwindled away during these intervening years. Some devout believers of the faith still remained, but did not exist as a society.

In 1844 a young lady of Cheshire visiting at Savoy experienced religion, and joined the Methodists, returning home her interest was so great that she established a series of meetings at school houses and private dwellings. A movement that ended in the founding of a church. John Cadwell of Savoy, formed the first class at the residence of Warner Farnum in 1844.

The Universalist society was revived during this epoch. Its first movement was almost coeval with the town. One of the noblest of American divines, William Murray traveled through here as early as 1795, preaching and teaching. He spoke from the pulpit of the west meeting house. One quite as early came doing the work of an evangelist, preaching in private houses and seeking converts to his faith upon every occasion.

One, perhaps the very first, stated minister was the Rev. Mr. Wilcox who occupied the house of the Third church on Sunday afternoons. He was a man of education and his name appears repeatedly on the town books in connection with the schools and their committees, as well as in other town offices. The Rev. Alfred Peck was stationed here in 1846.

Driving along the highways, or wandering through the quiet fields of Cheshire in the summer or autumn weather a thoughtful wanderer notes those neglected land marks of the past and its people, the grave stones, found not alone in the church yard, but on private domains, on isolated hillsides, in the stillness of the valleys, melancholy mile stones of life's journey, with inscriptions on mossy stones, name, date, sometimes linked with an historical association, with a local memory, a hint of custom or character of which they are the sole memorial.

Among the most interesting is that upon the farm of Mr. William P. Bennet, two miles from town. On this rural ground rest the remains of Col. Joab Stafford, the hero of Bennington, sleeping below the ancient beech tree, having as the tablet tells us, "fought and bled for his country."

Here, too, is recalled the presence of that brave woman who in the low brown house over yonder, beyond the hill, watched by her cradle, for a tiny grave stone bears record that on one of the first October days it was consecrated to the memory of the little sufferer who fought with death and went down in the conflict. Oftentimes one comes upon these time hallowed spots unawares. The grave-yards of the farm, neglected, forsaken, almost forgotten. Looking down into some narrow inclosure, covered with thick

tangled grasses, one sees the sunken graves, and on the mildewed sepulchral stones clustered there reads the familiar names of some of the old families of Cheshire. Although the locality remains, in the sad look of neglect can plainly be read that the farm has passed into other hands.

Many, many years ago Uncle Stephen Northup and Hezekiah Mason walked in company down the western slope from Thunder. Coming upon one of these spots they stopped in their walk, and struck with the beauty of the scene Hezekiah said with great earnestness:

"I tell you now if I live to die I'm going to be buried here."

Uncle Stephen more thoughtful and moderate responded after a short pause as he started up to pursue his walk:

"Yes its very pleasant, but I reckon I'll keep on down to the Corners', I seem to like it by the old church."

Judging from the inscriptions one may conclude that some of the fathers believed with the Bible that it is not well for man to dwell alone. Under a drooping willow or by some low growing pine is often seen a trio of gray stones with the following words, "Sally beloved consort of Cyrus, who died in 1797. Patience the virtuous consort of Cyrus, who died in 1800. Serene the well loved relict of the late Cyrus, who departed this life in 1806."

Alanson P. Dean and his brother Martin built a tannery on the Hoosac where for many years a lively business was carried on. Employment was given to a goodly number of men. Both of the proprietors built pleasant homes for themselves. A boarding house was put up, and well conducted for the convenience of the workmen, besides tenements for such as wished to rent them. The plat had the appearance of a thrifty, profitable institution of labor.

In 1845, Daniel Brown added to these industries a grist-mill which he planned to put upon the ground occupied in 1836, by the pot loft of the Crown Glass Company. In digging for the wheel pit the men found the white chunks of sand, not knowing what it was or how valuable it might prove. Mr. Frank Sayles seeing the chunks scattered about or gathered into heaps, took some of the deposit and sent to Boston for analysis. It was returned with a favorable decision, and every body knew beyond a peradventure that the old Crown Glass Company in their ignorance had brought their sand from Lanesborough to manufacture glass, while an inexhaustible mine lay concealed beneath the spot upon which they stood.

The verdict at Eden's gate has come home to man throughout the ages. God has made the world, and man the monarch of it. He fills the caves of ocean with pearls and coral, seams in the mountain with richest gems, and hides the ore deep in the mine, but man's right hand must win the rest, and wrench the secrets so thoroughly hidden from the earth.

In 1845, Andrew Bennet left the farm on the hillside and bought the house now owned by Miss J. Brown. A man of excellent judgment and kindliness of heart, he filled a large place in the little village and was often called upon to occupy offices of trust. His sons, Ambrose and Luther, afterward moved into the village, while another son, William P. Bennet, and daughter, Mrs. Amy Brown, occupy the ancestral farms.

## CHAPTER IX.

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FROM 1847—1857.

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GEORGE FISHER. STEAM MILLS. DEVELOPMENT OF GORDON SAND BED.  
IRON BUSINESS ESTABLISHED. GLASS MAKING. GEORGE MARTIN. MAN-  
UFACTURE OF BRICK. TANNERY. RICHARDSON & SON. E. D. FOSTER.  
SCHOOLS. METHODIST CHURCH BUILT. CATHOLIC WORSHIP ESTABLISHED.  
UNIVERSALIST CHURCH ERECTED. BAPTIST CHURCH. JOHN C. WOLCOTT.  
DR. ISAAC COLE. TIN SHOP. CABINET SHOP. WAGON SHOP.

This era, from 1847 to 1857, following so closely the construction of the Adams and Pittsfield railroad, was marked by a fresh impetus and the founding of a variety of new business interests in the village of Cheshire.

Farmers wishing to retire and live a less active life than they hitherto had done, turned their eyes toward the village with its fair promise of being a quiet, pleasant location for a home.

John M. Bliss, Sen., exchanged his farm at Muddy Brook, and took in the trade a house just being completed on Main street. The old red farm house at Muddy Brook was a charming home of the long ago. It stood upon the brow of a hill, down which a cross road run leading to the farms in the intervals, before the lower road was constructed, and connecting it with the old stage road over the hills, after it was built in 1832.

George Fisher came to town as early as 1835, and has grown up with the town since it awoke from its first nap. He has always been an active citizen and his name a familiar one in both business and political circles.

He built the large house known since as the residence of Stephen Chapman, and the cottage next to it. He then took the farm of J. M. Bliss, Sen., and moved from the village, but not from the town. In 1853 he made still another move upon a farm to the east, a farm upon which have been found deposits of gold and silver, and a strata of fine soap-stone.

George Fisher comes of a family that has had honorable mention in the history of the state for more than two hundred years. Coming up with their contemporaries from the early towns of the coast, they formed homes and settlements, were burned out by the remorseless Indian, proceeded



farther into the wilderness, their axes crashing against the primeval trees. Their names appearing in the records of the different settlements as surveyors, deacons, chairmen in the council chambers, and always known as prominent men and ardent patriots. It was just as a band of these men were asking for a name to the new township they were forming, that Burgoyne's surrender hastened the treaty Franklin had been striving to make at St. Cloud, after the capitulation at Saratoga. Louis XVI recognized the colonies and formed an alliance. So this committee with Jabez Fisher at their head, named their settlement Franklin, to which compliment the graceful statesman responded by presenting the town with books to establish a public library. And from this town, and from this family of such prominence and note, bearing its coat of arms, came our own townsman, George Fisher, bringing with him the same spirit of public zeal that animated his ancestors.

In 1847 the mountains were densely wooded, like huge cones clad in unbroken green they encircled the town, save where the valley roads opened their way here and there. Spruce and hemlock were the woods that predominated, but were intermingled with beech, maple and pine. After the advent of the railroad the call for lumber increased, as the market was accessible, and the lumbering trade was a lively and profitable one for a time. Choppers were employed at good prices, the streets were made lively by the bells of the teamsters driving over the hard packed wintry roads. The saw-mills were driven, and the buzzing of the mammoth saws and tumbling of the great wheels sounded incessantly. Lumber was shipped daily at the station for different places. Chatham, just growing up under the impulse of the Harlem railroad, connecting there with the Boston and Albany, was three-fourths built with lumber sawed from these mountain trees. The big dam at Holyoke contracted for Cheshire timber, and to dwellings and towns it was sent by far too often to keep the tally.

This called for steam mills, the first one ever built in town was that at Scrabbletown, by Lawriston Potter, which he soon sold to Steers. Later, Potter built a steam mill on his garden plat, just beyond the low, rambling house still standing at Scrabbletown.

In 1847 Samuel Smith bought the land and all right of sand in the bed discovered in 1845. Within the month of May, 1847, the sand bed changed hands twice. First, it was sold to Henshawe & Obdelle. Second, to the Berkshire Glass Company.

During this year sand was shipped to France, and two dividends were made to the stockholders. After the discovery of sand in 1845, it was dug, but in a primitive and crude style. No machinery was used in the beginning, being hauled from the beds in carts drawn by horses, rude sheds were built where it was washed and packed.

Mr. Francis Potter, now in California, is said to have dug and shipped the first invoice of sand from this bed.

In 1847 Mr. Chandler T. Ford, a student from Williams College, came to Cheshire, rented the office that adjoins now the residence of Miss Jeanette Brown, and taught there for two successive winters a select school, where young gentlemen and ladies were at liberty to pursue astronomy, philosophy, and higher mathematics if they chose to do so. This move inaugurated an era of select schools. Mr. W. G. Waterman, a gentleman of marked education, and a lover of books, a gentleman too, who had been deeply interested in the educational interests of the town, put up a house on Main street in 1849, containing accommodations for a school. This he opened late in the year of 1849, taking an unlimited number of day scholars and some boarders.

In 1848 James N. Richmond and Seneca Pettee bought the land for the iron furnace of R. B. Wolcott. The buildings were drafted at once and construction began, they were not completed, however, until January, 1851. The 18th of January, 1851, the furnace was filled with coal to heat it. February 11th the first casting of pigs was made from iron ore dug in the King ore bed.

The business was managed for a time by Messrs. Pettee & Richmond, then N. H. Stevens, a gentleman in the iron works at North Adams, becoming one of the owners, moved into town for a short time acting as superintendent of the furnace.

Next a company was formed called the Union Iron Co., which, keeping the institution for only a term of months, turned it over to Sampson, Bright & Barker. These gentlemen kept it until 1857, when it was closed for a while.

In 1848 Mr. George Martin located upon a mountain woodland farm in Cheshire. For a few years he spent with his family the summers on this farm, and returned with the fall to his home in the city of Albany. Naturally a business man, his name was known ever after this date among the townspeople. In 1856 he moved his family to the village, and began the business of a butcher, a branch that was needed in Cheshire, and one to which Mr. Martin was bred in "Merrie England" before ever he came over the waters to America. Commencing in a small way, using only one half a beef per week, with his accustomed energy he pushed his business, and it was soon increasing on his hands. The Hoosac Tunnel was in the course of construction at that time, with periodical seasons of silence, and labor. As a busy year came around, and the rural hamlet at the western terminus increased rapidly in population, Mr. Martin secured the contract to supply them with the meat they consumed, and found that from one-half a beef, he required full fifteen each week to fill his orders.

In 1848 the Methodist church put up their new edifice on Main street. A neat building with a pleasant audience room. Although no large amount was expended upon this structure, it was used to the best advantage, and, the church seemed when completed like one of the most cheery houses of worship in the land.

Elder John Foster preached through 1849, and part of 1850; but ill with that fatal disease, consumption, he died during the year, and Elder Hunt was stationed at Cheshire.

In 1851 South Adams and Cheshire were associated with Elder Thomas Lodge as pastor, 1852 Elder S. H. Hancock, 1853 Elder A. W. Garvin with parsonage at Cheshire. In 1854 Rev. S. H. Hancock with 90 members in the church, and 70 scholars in the Sunday-school. In 1857 Rev. James G. Phillips was pastor.

In 1848 the land was given by Mrs. Sally Foster, daughter of Captain Brown, to the Universalist church and society for a church building to be erected in which a preacher of their peculiar faith and doctrine should preach, and the building was put up without delay. The wealth of this denomination was in the hands of a few. These few gave liberally, and a pretty building upon a remarkably pleasant site was the result of their undertaking. Rev. Almond Mason was their pastor at this time. His father was an early dweller, an "Old-timer" of Cheshire, but Mr. Almond Mason himself was born in the town of Adams. He was, however, well known in the vicinity, and much beloved. A man of persuasive manner, with much personal magnetism, and great power of control over the young.

Mr. Mason was a grand singer, while he taught the people from his pulpit he paid marked attention to his choir, often joining them in his own deep voice of rich pathos and beauty. Crowds often attended the services of this minister, captivated by the music he always managed to have from his choir of young people, and interested in his lessons of faith, practice and morality. His doctrines of present punishment for sins committed, and universal salvation. He had many followers who avowed themselves believers in his creeds.

Almond Mason had, in early manhood, sat under the teachings of Father Leland, as indeed had many who now identified themselves with this new departure. To use the somewhat homely, but apt figure of Leland himself: "Some who had been hatched in the days of the Great Reformation as his *chickens*, were Davis's *pullets*, in the Methodist excitement of 1823, and were now full fledged, *hens* of Mr. Mason's."

It is a significant fact that the descendants of the Ten Aggrieved Brethren who turned sorrowfully away from Elder Leland and his church came (many of them) and united themselves with this interest. In 1850

Rev. Mr. Miller was preaching to the church. In 1852 the Rev. Mr. Plumb officiated in the pulpit, coming from over Stamford way, he never lived among the people. In 1853 Mr. Palmer was engaged, and as supplies for short times Rev. Mr. Waggoner and Guilford.

Owen Turtle entered Cheshire in 1848. He has always been an industrious frugal man, working all these years, save perhaps one or two, in the beginning, for the Berkshire Glass Sand Company. He has just cause for pride in his children all of whom do him honor. Thomas received the appointment from this district to enter West Point in 1863, where he graduated with honors in 1867. James, his second son, graduated at Michigan University, and is a civil engineer. William, his third son, is a rising young lawyer in Pittsfield, a graduate of Harvard law school, while Owen, Jr., is making a success in the teaching of music. He is highly gifted in this direction and has a fine voice. He is connected with the conservatory of Music at Pittsfield.

In 1849 Thomas Olin bought the saw-mill on the notch road, and for many years turned out large quantities of lumber. At the same time Francis Jones and Reuben Humphreyville bought the saw-mill above this. At a later period this was owned by Jones and Norman Cotton.

In 1850 Mr. Potter kept a clothing store on Main street.

In 1850 James N. Richmond bought land of Thomas Brown on the north side of the highway beyond the Hoosac at the Scrabletown crossing. Upon this land a new glass house was erected. A stock company was formed among capitalists, and the money was mostly owned in New York City. Something like \$80,000 was the sum they operated with. The buildings were put up under the personal supervision of J. N. Richmond, who was a lawyer by profession and practice, but being by nature a shrewd business manager with a taste in that direction, he had given his attention to this branch of business, had moved to Cheshire not far from the beginning of this decade, and after closing his interest with the iron furnace, was employed by the New York parties as their agent in the construction of the glass house. Men were imported from New Jersey and Pennsylvania who were blowers, flatteners and cutters, and thoroughly trained in the skilled labor of glass-making. Houses were built by the company for the workmen, which they might rent or purchase as pleased them best. Many brought their families and made homes for themselves in the little boro' of Scrabletown. At night the bright lights from the furnace and blowing rooms gleamed out across the Hoosac and its meadows, and with the castings at the iron works, and the lamps sending their rays over the snowy streets from Foster's store, and the long windows of his house on the corner, rendered that portion of the village especially bright and cheery.

The glass factory at first manufactured window glass only, but commenced in 1854 to make rough plate glass for floors and roofs. For this they cast the glass, rolled it under an immense pressure, and when finished it was half an inch in thickness. They used 2,800 pounds of sand, 500 pounds of soda ash, 800 pounds of lime, to make 600 feet of half-inch glass, which it took them a day to construct. This they sold in market for fifty cents per foot, a yield of \$300 per day for nine months in the year, the remaining time being used for repairs.

In 1853, this factory burned, but was rebuilt at once by J. N. Richmond. It then passed into the hands of a stock company who kept it for only a short time, changing owners again it took the name of The Crystal Glass Company. Experiments were constantly made looking toward a polished plate glass. The proprietors argued that the sand was so abundant, so close to the works, and of such superior quality that they should soon be able to furnish the market with the finest of plate glass.

In 1857 Covell Wolcott, Esq., ran the factory for one single year, then its doors were closed, the fires burned out, the huge smelting pots were empty: the flattening ovens, and cutting tables fell into disuse; darkness and solitude brooded over the yards, and through the long buildings, fit home for bats and owls, and the busy industry was over. The men thrown out of employment could not retain their homes, so gradually left for other towns where work could be obtained, and the last condition was worse than the first.

Stores were put up by the iron company and glass company. The first upon the site of the home of R. V. Wood, and the latter directly across the way.

W. F. Richmond was the book-keeper for the glass company, at this store where they had their office for the transaction of all business.

A large millinery store was opened in the winter of 1849-50 in this part of the village.

In 1850 Peter Trotier was engaged in the manufacture of brick between the depot and the hill toward the south. Deposits of clay were found there.

In 1850 Ira Richardson & Son bought an interest in the tannery of the Dean Brothers and the firm name was Deans & Richardsons. In 1855 the Deans disposed of their interest and it became Richardson & Son.

Ezra Edmunds who was the village shoemaker built the house opposite that of Dr. Cole's and carried on his shop here until in 1850 he sold to Israel Cole, a wealthy farmer from Adams.

In 1850 E. D. Foster built the house now owned by H. C. Bowen. It was a beautiful home well arranged without and within, filled with books, pictures and music with which its master loved to surround his family.

There was no more attractive residences, nor none where young people so well loved to congregate as at this one. Pleasant parties were given there by its genial owners and the hospitable doors thrown open. The society lover, as well as the lover of fine books at that time, will ever remember the advantages of that home.

In 1850 the old brick school-house was sadly dilapidated. Its yellow benches were cut and hacked by the jack-knife of many a boy, the seats broken in places, the hearth sunken underneath the long box stove, the desk defaced, the windows were cracked, and patched with putty.

The worn door sill, and the wooden steps were polished by the contact of all the feet that had trodden them, while the dark red paint was worn smooth, and almost black from smoke and time. The caricature of some teacher drawn on the plastered walls, or cut in the painted woodwork, a couplet here and there, printed by some mischievous urchin, and the hundred names and initials—more or less—scattered hither and yon about the old building told many a tale of those who once made the walls echo with their mirth and song. In the winter of 1850-51 the last term was taught with a crowded class, and the ensuing spring the familiar building was torn down.

On the church green another school house went up, dazzling in fresh paint and green shades, with long windows, and new fashioned desk, where another race of girls and boys ate and exchanged bites of their apples and cookies at noontime, and raced on their sleds and skates at recess.

It 1850 Father Cavanagh, a parish priest from Pittsfield, commenced holding divine service in Cheshire. He made appointments from place to place at private houses.

In 1850 R. M. Cole took into partnership his brother C. D. Cole, the firm becoming R. M. Cole & Brother.

In 1851 Rev. F. S. Parkes was secured as pastor of the Third Cheshire church, and officiated as such for four years, until 1855, when Elder Henry Clarke of Pittsfield, who had always been a favorite in the parish with old and young, was secured and returned to take charge of the church, although he resided in Pittsfield.

During the stay of Elder Parkes there were some troubles among the people of the church, however, there were twenty additions to its roll by baptism, and there were ninety-nine members when Elder Parkes closed his labors with them in 1855.

The subject of a Sabbath-school in connection with the Third church had often been agitated, but as Elder Leland did not quite approve of working in this way, it had never met with hearty approval. Elder Leland believed that home was the place to teach children, rather than Sabbath-school.

In 1855 the objections subsided somewhat and a Sunday-school organized

under the preaching of Elder Clarke, with James N. Richmond, Esq., as superintendent. In 1856 the association met with the Cheshire church—delegates and members from seventeen churches in attendance. In 1856 Dr. Cole was appointed Sunday school superintendent. In 1857 Elder Pease filled the pulpit, with 102 members.

In 1852 a steam mill for sawing lumber was put up on the banks of the Hoosac, just beyond the depot. After a few years of operation the firm dissolved, the mill fell into the hands of R. C. Brown, who with Francis Jones for partner carried it on for a time and sold to Augustus Loyd.

In 1852 Mr. Foster removed the store that he occupied, and which stood across the village street from Captain Brown's to the lot next west of his new residence, enlarged the capacity of the building, increased his stock, and went on with his trade for some years at this point.

In 1852 Miss Clara Cone opened a school in the basement of the Third Baptist church, and for a term of years the organization grew in strength. Miss Darling succeeded Miss Cone, and always some efficient teacher was found to fill the gap, as one left the post, and the district school was so crowded with children of all ages and sizes that those who left it for the forms, neatly arranged in the neighboring basement, were scarcely missed.

In 1852 Father Cuddihy came among the people and made arrangements to use the Mechanic's hall. He remained as pastor until 1854. During this year Father Parcell, parish priest at Pittsfield took charge of the Cheshire parish, and continued preaching to the people at Mechanic's hall.

All these growing industries, but especially the steam mills and lumbering, the Berkshire Glass Sand Co., the iron furnace and glass house were feathers in the cap of Cheshire. They brought capital to the town, made freight for the railroad, put money in circulation and filled the town with people.

In 1853 Alanson P. Dean erected the fine and commodious dwelling on the Meeting House Hill, which has been filled in modern times with city boarders by Mrs. R. C. Brown.

In 1853 Dr. L. J. Cole feeling his health giving away under the arduous labors of years, made arrangements to associate himself in his profession with some younger man, and took into practice with him Dr. Isaac Cole. They built the office still standing on Main street, and owned by Mason Chapman. Dr. L. J. Cole was absent during this summer in Boston, being on the committee for revising the Constitution of the Commonwealth.

In the fall of 1857 the partnership was broken up by Dr. Isaac Cole, who was completely won by the manifold attractions offered at the far west, unfolding so rapidly at that period, and left for the country beyond the Mississippi.

Dr. Cole, finding that his ride was more extensive, his duties greater than

ever they had been before, feared that physically he could not cope with them, and sold his office and ride to Dr. A. M. Bowker of Savoy, who immediately took possession of the office and house vacated by Dr. Isaac Cole. And Dr. Cole, after thirty years of continued, conscientious practice, retired, thus giving himself time to recuperate and regain his health.

The Cole Brothers entered into a partnership in the tannery business with Nathan Mason, at the Kitchen, in 1853. This was an old established business, one of the first industries of the town. During this decade Mr. Allen Brown moved the store, occupied first by Russell Brown, on the hill to Depot street, where he opened a tin store.

Hiram Brown owned a cabinet shop which was quite an industry in the village for sometime. Jessie Jenks came into the place with his family and bought a home on Main street. Frank Pettibone bought a shop on Main street carried on a wagon maker's establishment and kept a forge. Peter Trotier also was in nearly the same business in an adjoining building; they consolidated at last and went on together for a time.

Rufus Glover kept a smithy's forge at Scrabbletown for a long term of years.

Cheshire, whether fortunately or the reverse, must be a matter of opinion, has never been infested to any great degree, by lawyers. In 1854 G. E. Cole, a young man who had just completed his studies, opened a law office in a room above the store of R. C. Brown. What his success in the village might have been can hardly be told, as his stay was so short. In 1857 he anticipated the oft reiterated advice of Horace Greeley to young men, to "go west," and found a wider field of action in the, then, territory of Minnesota.

John C. Wolcott who, blessed with ability and talents far more than ordinary, has been a character of somewhat erratic light, is the only lawyer that the town can boast. Well educated, a student by nature, heir at different times to large estates, had he lived up to the possibilities of his life he might have stood to-day where the rivers of success flow, and his name been written high on the ladder of fame. Returning from college in 1844, he fitted up the low store for his office and occupied it for some years as his den,



## CHAPTER X.

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### FROM 1857—1867.

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COUNTRY LIFE. GEORGE W. GORDON BUYS SAND BED. R. A. BURGET.  
BUSINESS CHANGES. STAFFORD HILL CHURCH TORN DOWN. THIRD  
CHURCH. TEMPERANCE CAUSE. UNIVERSALIST. METHODIST. CATHOLIC.  
STEAM MILLS. PUBLIC LIBRARY. NEW CEMETERY LAID OUT. BREAKING  
OUT OF WAR. OUR BOYS IN BLUE.

And now the farms laid out in the woods had grown to be pleasant dwelling places, the days and the work went on pleasantly, the progress made was strong and firm. The amphitheatre of the pastures with the circling boundaries of woods, pierced on the horizon by the creeping railroad trains came to be considered better even than before, by the farmers who at first had rebelled at the thought of having their noble meadows crossed by the iron steed, or the pastures where their herds fed cut in two by the track.

It was rather an advantage than otherwise, after all, they concluded. The long, crumbly, soft slopes of the ploughed land that could just as well stretch up to the woods, as down in the valley, were as mellow as need be.

The little home landscapes were as snug, and the rich, billowing fields with their patches of wide-leaved clover looked just as well to these farmers, indeed, they rather enjoyed sitting on the porch with their wives, when the churning was done, and the meals were over, and watch the engine going up the valley, leaving its train of smoke behind it like a long silver cloud.

These same farmers had said in the beginning that the smoke, dust and cinders would fill the springs that run by the wayside and spoil the water that they drank, that the smell of the smoke would fill the air and destroy the sweet summery odors, that the sparks would set fire to the sheds, pens and woodhouses, and so forth, but the buildings never took fire, the water trickled through the limestone just as pure, the spicy furs and lilacs were as sweet and the unmown blossoms along the farmers' willowy, bushy, seedy back roads filled the air with their usual perfume.

Besides the market was higher for their produce, and far easier of access. The floors for the iron track had to be laid, and the water for the tanks at

the station below carried from the highland springs across the intervalles, and these farms were well timbered and watered, still more the generous sum paid for damages made a little nest egg for a rainy day, and smoothed up rough angles wonderfully.

In blissful ignorance of what was going to happen in the near future, little dreaming that the country was soon to be made sick with the terrible flavors and blood of war, they lived on in their quiet comfort, increasing their friendships and affections, delighting in their merry makings and careless hospitalities, enjoying their books and work and country sports.

The sympathy sometimes expressed for the lack of excitement and variety of American country life is all bosh ! As life goes on, in the prosperous country homes, be they in the village or on the farm, nothing could be more delightful. Trained to hardships in early life, the men, are perhaps, indifferent to luxury, care little for outside form and would despise city rules of etiquette, but no dread privation stalks through their halls, nor carping care sits at their board. Masters of comfortable homes, fathers of blooming girls and stalwart boys, they are content. Pleasure is found for them in driving over the shadowy green fields their gentle Alderneys and Jerseys with eyes like a gazelle, their short horned Durhams and beautifully formed Devons all of which are *too good to sell*.

These men were not conventional and cared not for society, but they were descendants of those who sailed in the "Mayflower that day," and were full of self respect and simple dignity. They were true and brave, and when the issue came would take their muskets on the shoulder and enter in the rank and file of the army.

The best families of the town were of high refinement, endowed with good health and sense. The ladies were fond of dress and company in a sufficient degree to keep the village society moving. The girls were stylish and had been educated in good schools, at home or at some boarding school abroad, they gave entertainments that were attractive with music, refreshments, bright conversation and so on, thus keeping things lively for those who enjoyed social life, and those who did not, kept away, as from something that did not concern them.

So while all things seemed well with them they came down toward the year 1860. Trees were standing in the woods, but they would grow and the chopper would cut them down that they might help to build the car which soldiers should ride forth to victory or to death.

Blankets laid away in bureau drawers, when the soldiers of 1812 required them no more, waited through all the years wrapped in cedar shavings, but the day was surely coming when they would be taken out to do service again. Bundles of linen and balls of lint, in the depths of dark chests, redolent with

lavender and bergamot, were tossed about by the careful housewife from time to time while she wondered for what she saved them. She did, and the cry would soon come up from Southern hospitals for just these things.

An old lady sat by her chimney corner fashioning warm, soft socks and mittens. "For whom are you knitting Granny Owens?" some one asked one day. "Oh, for our boys, for John, and Joe, and Bill, they are in the meadow yonder raking hay." John and Joe and Bill had lived to elderly men and died, all past the three-score given to man. Many a day had passed since they had raked the hay in the meadow. The poor old mother, almost a hundred years old lived in a dream. To her it was very real that her boys stood by her chair on the shadowy stoop, and came up from the ten acre lot at nightfall. Therefore the pile of stockings and mittens, knit soft and warm, and long, just as "our boys" loved to have them grew, as the years were numbered, and they would be needed, surely needed for the tramp, tramp of Uncle Abraham's fifty thousand more, was soon to be echoed across a continent. In the meantime daily life went on.

On October 4th, 1858, George W. Gordon of Boston, bought of the Berkshire Glass Company all rights of sand belonging to them, and shortly after all the land. In the same year Mr. Gordon employed R. C. Brown as his agent. Men were employed to work the bed. Sand was dug, washed and shipped to the different markets.

There was quite an extensive revival of religion among the Methodist people during the latter part of this decade. In 1858 Rev. J. B. Wood was minister at both South Adams and Cheshire. In 1860 Rev. Henry Johns was located at Cheshire. He enlisted as chaplain of the 49th, a Berkshire regiment, and at the close of the war wrote a history of their life in the camp and field. In 1862 Mr. Ransom was pastor, 1863 Rev. Mr. Taylor, 1864 Rev. Mr. Osborne, 1865 Rev. Aaron Hall, 1867 Rev. Mr. Hurd.

The church on Stafford's Hill had no thrilling events to record for many years before its demise. Through the storms of half a century it had stood upon the hill-top, builded there in 1786, rather than where it stood first by the church yard in the northern slope, because of the village around it. It had seen house after house go down, family after family remove, until its windows looked upon a bare hillside. Neglected and forsaken, it stood upon the highest point, a land mark for miles and miles around. The shutters high up in the belfry tower flapped and banged in the blasts of November, the great doors creaked and groaned, the pulpit from which the "Arduous Werden" preached, where, too, was often heard the voice of the "pleasing Covell," where the "pious Mason," plead with sinners and the popular Leland spoke to the breathless throng that packed the pews and aisles below, was dusty and cobwebbed still more, was shaky and

tottering, the glory of the old church had departed. It could not be rebuilt by empty fields, and wind-tossed trees, so it was torn down, and just one puny tree marks its site, a little to the north of the isolated farm house.

Rev. Noah Bushnell lived at the hill, after the church was gone, upon the church farm; but as he too, grew toward old age he left it for a home at the newer village, where he died at an advanced age. The church farm was managed by Shubal Lincoln as trustee. He rented it, looked after necessary repairs, kept the houses in comfortable order, and what surplus of money there may be is used for the support of the faith of the early owners of the soil.

The Third Cheshire church was visited in 1858 by Rev. Emerson Andrews, an evangelist. Quite a large number of conversions followed his labors, and several additions were made to the church. Later in the decade, about 1866-67, there was still another quite strong religious feeling. Union meetings were held in the churches, and much interest was manifested among the young.

Elder Fernando Bestor was secured as pastor of the Third church in 1858. He was a devoted Christian worker, and an able man. He remained however only seven years, for in 1865 he was succeeded by the Rev. O. C. Kirkham. During this decade the parsonage at the foot of the hill was purchased. The Rev. Mr. Ballou was stationed as pastor of the Universalist church in the early part of the decade, and later Mr. Stoddard, they were both energetic, working pastors. For a short time during the stay of Mr. Stoddard, Rev. Mr. Bondrie was supplying the Methodist pulpit, and being a strong and deeply interested worker in the temperance movement, he interested Mr. Stoddard, and some of the influential people of the town, so that with a united, vigorous effort, they organized a real, live and efficient temperance society, with its Band of Hope for the children, and a meeting for older people, in which the members took a lively and abiding interest.

Mr. Warner opened in 1859, a school in the basement of the Baptist church which was well sustained and after he closed his connection with it, it was carried on by Miss Jane Martin for many successive years, and until the present system of grade schools were inaugurated, this school was an institution here. Mr. Albert Wells also taught a select school on Main street.

In 1859 Dexter Angel kept the hotel at the Wolcott stand. In 1862 Nathan Angel was the landlord, and in 1864 Daniel Morey. With the exit of the last named proprietor, this time honored inn closed its public record, after this date it was occupied by the family.

The Catholics bought in 1860 the Allen Brown hall where they held services with Father Purcell of Pittsfield until 1866, then they hired the

Universalist house, as so many members of that church had died—so many moved from town, that the burden fell very heavy upon the few who were left to sustain regular service, and they decided to give up the attempt for a time and rent their house.

In 1860, on the 30th of March, Homer Jenks who had commenced business, (dry goods and groceries,) in the store built by Otis Cole on Depot street, was appointed postmaster, this office he held only one year. Mr. Peter Trotier living where Mr. Nathan Harkness now lives, opened a temperance house and received the appointment of postmaster on December 24, 1861.

In 1861 another pleasant and valuable addition was made to the town and its society in the families of Mr. John Bucklin and Mr. H. C. Bowen. Mr. Bowen going into business at the stand of E. D. Foster. The recently published Bowen memorial traces back the family to Wales, in the eleventh century, and gives their coat of arms. H. C. Bowen is descended from Griffith Bowen.

In 1862 George Martin bought of A. P. Dean his share in the steam mill and the firm of Dean & Martin was established. In 1863 G. Z. Dean entered the mercantile firm of J. B. Dean, the firm being known as Dean & Son.

After five years of silence, in 1862, J. N. Richmond started up the glass factory again. He, however, gave it only a short trial and sold out, March, 1864, leaving it in the proprietorship of J. B. Dean, George Martin, Daniel Burt and George Reed.

For another year it went on its way, this was its final effort, and with the end of 1865, the Union Crystal Glass Company closed its varied career and fell into oblivion.

July 23d, 1863, the Richmond Iron Company bought the furnace which had been lying idle so long, and sent R. A. Burget here as their agent. A fortunate step for the Iron Company and an especially fortunate one for the town, as it gave to Cheshire an energetic, whole souled and useful citizen. One who has ever been among the first to act in all steps leading to the improvement and welfare of the town, ever ready to bear his share of every burden and expense.

Mr. Burget is a descendant of Coenreat Boryghardt, who first settled in Kinderhook, N. Y. We find in Mr. C. J. Taylor's able "History of Great Barrington," that "this Coenreat Boryghardt is mentioned in the Documentary History of New York, as a prominent resident of Kinderhook in 1702, and again in 1720. He was an active agent in purchasing the Housatonic township of the Indians, and was afterward employed to make purchase of a tract of land further north. These Indian owners, thirty-one in number, came to his house in Kinderhook, in 1731, and were entertained

by him for seventeen days 'with great fatigue and trouble to himself.' In 1742, the General Court, in consideration of his services, granted him a tract of land of 200 acres, lying (if we mistake not) in the town of Richmond. After his removal to Great Barrington he added other lands, and at his death appears to have been the most wealthy of all the settlers, and to have maintained an influential position among them."

In 1865 the steam mill of Augustus Loyd burned. He in company with F. F. Petitelere rebuilt the mill. They increased the business, made fellows in addition to the sawing of lumber and other items. In 1867 Mr. Petitelere sold out to Mr. Frank Jenks.

Early in this decade W. F. Richmond carried on a carriage trimming and harness-maker's shop on Main street. In 1867 he kept a restaurant on Main street. In 1866 Mr. J. D. Northup left the farm upon which the family had lived since the earliest days of the settlement, when the pioneer, Stephen Northup, constructed the crude box and built the midnight fire to foil the ravenous wolves. There came also Harry Ingalls, his brother-in-law, son of Stephen Ingalls, Mr. Northup's nearest neighbor. These two made their homes on Depot street.

In 1866 another institution was organized, of which it is a pleasure to speak. This is the public library. A village library is nothing new under the sun. This village has been blessed with one before, but a library as successful in all points as this one has been, is somewhat rare. In the district library's history may be read that of the large majority. A few hundred books are purchased, so few that they do not require one especially to care for them, therefore, on the counter of some store they find room with an arrangement by which some clerk will look after and give them out once a week either gratuitously or for a nominal sum. An arrangement that runs well for a little time then the interest of the public dies away, the attention of the clerk gives place to inattention, and the books one by one are neglected, misplaced and forgotten. So it had fared with the books belonging to the original first library. In this day of books, when every family is provided with many, a public library must of necessity have a considerable variety and number of volumes on its shelves, even at the very outset; must be of sufficient value to make all feel the importance of caring for it, and of making additions to it. Something like this was the start of this library in 1866.

A stock company was formed, each member to pay \$5 a share, subject to \$1 per year tax. This did not give a fabulous sum to purchase books with in the offset. However, the books were obtained, selected with great care: A building erected especially for them and a librarian procured, who made the care of the books secondary to nothing.

For a short time the library was kept in the store of J. B. Dean, Mr. William Martin, librarian. It was then removed to the building now used, but which stood then upon the present site of the Catholic church. Miss Kate Richmond, librarian. When the building was purchased for the library it was moved to its present lot. Mr. Martin took charge of it again, after which it fell to the care of Miss Richmond until she left town. Miss Jennie Foster and Miss Eva Cummings were librarians at different times. Miss Mary Martin succeeded and held the post until the fall of 1883, when she was succeeded by her sister, Miss Emma Martin. What would have been the ultimate fate of this library had it not have had as the most interested of workers in its behalf our whole souled philanthropic townsman, E. D. Foster, Esq., cannot be predicted. Throwing his whole heart into the work, he has talked and planned and begged for the Cheshire library. Situated as but few are he could command the attention of some of the leading men of the state, poets, writers and historians. He used the fluent language ever ready upon his lips to its utmost possibility, and the books came pouring in from all directions. Authors donated to Mr. Foster their works. People who were in position to command duplicate copies of desirable works handed them to Foster for his pet project, the Cheshire library. Talented men who prepared a lecture in the fall to deliver through the winter, upon some occasions gave their lecture for the benefit of the library. General Foster had many strings to his bow and he managed them admirably.

After the removal of Dr. Bowker, Dr. Phillips entered Cheshire as a medical practitioner. He was a young man, a grandson of Dr. Tyler of Adams, who was well known through the the valley. Much of the time Dr. H. Y. Phillips has been alone in his profession. Sometimes he has had competition.

In 1859, the town voted to purchase a lot for a new cemetery. The following committee was chosen: Daniel B. Brown, Alanson P. Dean, Calvin Ingalls, Return M. Cole, Andrew Bennet. Alanson P. Dean was appointed to take charge and direct oversight of the drafting of the cemetery when the lot was decided upon.

On the crest of a hill, at the base of which the village lies, a desirable spot was found, of fine rolling ground. Six acres were purchased of the Wolcotts for \$750. During the year 1859, the expenses of laying out, enclosing and adorning amounted to \$775.44. During 1860 the amount was \$656.45. It reaches from the brook on one side, to the highway on the other. Gray willows stretch their arms over the brook in the ravine below, and round-topped maples grow on the hillside. It is laid out with great taste and has all the beauty of a park. The monuments are noticeable for the variety shown both in their form and surroundings. Slab, and shaft, gleam through willow, evergreens and shrubbery, and through the

soft, warm days steals the fragrance of flowers, cultivated there by loving hands. Trees shade the winding paths and driveways, and over it all lingers an air of peaceful rest and quiet beauty, the hush only broken by the murmur of the busy brook and the humming of the brown bees.

The ancient burial place, across from the church, still remains in its neglected field. The pathless, half-walled inclosure is overgrown with rank grass and tall weeds. Now and then a stone cants sideways, and again one has toppled over. It has a feeling of unrest and neglect, as though it doubted the interest of the present generation. But its occupants sleep their dreamless sleep, rarely visited save by some explorer who kneels to read the inscriptions engraved on the bowed and mossy tombstones, upon which the dead tallied the years for a century, but where they keep the score no more.

In the new cemetery, beneath the turf and the bloom, lie our soldiers who came back to us no more, and with every returning spring, upon their graves are placed fresh garlands, and above their ashes memory's wreaths are twined anew.

With this decade a century closes since the history of our town began, and with the year 1867 ends a decade of years, for which can be claimed a position unequalled throughout the records of time. The interest of history has always seemed to cluster around some few periods.

The ten years from 1490 to 1500 gave America to the world; taught Vasco da Gama the water route to the Indies, and made changes among the crowned heads of Europe, that altered the whole type of the times.

That from 1640 to 1650 developed the long Parliament, and gave Oliver Cromwell as Lord Protector to England. That from 1765 to 1775, that led up to our own revolutionary struggle, was full of interest to a world looking on, and they were all fraught with momentous issues. But the one of which we write leads them all, and contains more to excite the sympathy and arouse the wonder of man than any other. There is not time to look at the changes made among the powers in the old world, and the interests uprooted there; but in our own America, continental railways were organized, the remotest nations conversed with us through cables laid in the deep green sea—the sea that man was once afraid to navigate. Marvellous inventions and discoveries in science have been made by which man will take gigantic strides in the mission given him, to reclaim and possess the world, and an unparalleled war been fought on new principles and with new weapons.

In 1856, the Republican party, that had just then sprung into existence, was beaten, but showed so strong that it frightened the slaveholders and their allies. In 1860 the Democratic party allowed it to beat by splitting



at the Charleston Convention, intending to make the election of the republican president a plea to demand that the slave-holding States might leave the Union.

When on the 9th of January, 1861, the "Star of the East" stole along the waters of Charleston harbor, seeking to carry provisions to the garrison at Sumter, and received the fire of the rebel batteries, the war actually dated; but not until the guns, aimed at Sumter itself, sent out their wild alarm in April of '61 did the people spring to action. Then excitement ran at flood tide, a mighty war broke out and darkened the land.

England virtually made herself a party to this war. France acknowledged the confederacy as a belligerent, sent Maximilian to Mexico, showing a desire to aid the South and threaten us with a European war in our time of trouble.

It was in 1862, after the battle of Antietam, and the vow of Abraham Lincoln, that the Emancipation Proclamation startled the world. The hundred days of grace were not accepted; had they been, probably, slavery would have been fixed upon America for time. The first great blow was the proclamation, the second was putting colored troops into the field.

Could our leaders have looked from some prophetic Pisgah down the years from April 12, 1861, to April 9, 1865, when Grant and Lee stood beneath the shade of that historic apple tree at Appomattox Court House, they would have doubted their capacity to do half that was done, and would, perhaps, have turned from the attempt. There was Gettysburg and Vicksburg, and Sherman's march to the Atlantic, through the enemy's land, an unparalleled feat in warfare; but over against these was the fatal Peninsular Campaign of 1862, where so many bones were left to whiten in the swamps and along the low shores of the Pamunky. There were Fredericksburg and Chancellorsville, the dark days of Chickamunga and Andersonville and Libby that roll up a mighty wave of human woe that cannot be computed. Not a town, not a village, scarcely a hamlet, but has some victim in these terrific holocausts.

And all the excitement and patriotism of the hour, in 1861, pulsed through the hearts of Cheshire men and women. Meetings were called; the long sheds of the furnace, idle now, furnished a convenient place to rally. Thrilling speeches were made, words of patriotic eloquence spoken, enlistment papers unrolled and men mustered into service.

As in every town, so here; some opposed the war and advised letting the South alone; but the masses were loyal and rallied to their country's call in her hour of peril. Societies were formed. Socks and mittens knit, havelocks, pin cushions, needle books, shirts and towels made, blankets brought out that the grandmothers had spun and woven; a thousand things prepared that soldiers would need, a thousand more that they never could use.

Oh, the busy, sad days of that summer of 1861, when war was new to all. A summer so real and vivid and strange then, as its swift happenings rushed across our lines: a summer, passing now into a dream, as far away as the older battle days, and we tell to many a bright-eyed girl and boy the story of the "Rising of 1861," as our grandmothers told to us that of 1775.

Only twenty years, or little more, since that summer of sunshine and shower, since its golden grain was garnered in the valley, since the Sickles and Archer traveled through that summer's sky, and Scorpio swung her fiery tail along the horizon: but it is almost forgotten.

There was the gathering of troops; the martial music; the reverberating drum: the bright uniforms; the barracks, where the loved, from the family circle, went into camp and drilled for the battle field: the drives over, through the summery roads, to the town where the tents were pitched, and the companies remained until ordered on to the conflict: the spending of the day with some dear friend, perhaps a brother or husband, perhaps him to whom the love troth was plighted: the peering in at the low tents, the mess room, the drill, the dress parade; the good-bye by the great camp gate, the pressure of the hand at parting, and the ride home through the evening dews. Then the final call, the last drill, the breaking camp, the deserted ground, the chartered railroad train trimmed with flags and evergreens, loaded with the "Boys in Blue," the life and drum, the perfect march, the wild excitement, the jokes and merriments, until amid wild huzzas and shouts, and cheers, and waving handkerchiefs and tears, they were off and gone. Such was the oft-repeated picture of the hours and the days of the war summer.

And the coming home, none could foretell it then. Alas! all know it now. Sometimes our proud young heroes came again as conquerors come. Some walk our village streets to-day living monuments of the truth of prison pens and the horrors of battle; and for some there was the long funeral train, the tolling bell, and the soldier's grave.

Among regiments in which Cheshire men enlisted were the 37th, that went out in 1862, the 49th, in which D. B. Foster was lieutenant and Rev. Henry Johns was chaplain, and the 1st cavalry, 64th battalion, in the latter J. G. Woodruff enlisted and several others. They were with Grant when, in the spring of 1864, he made the onward move to Richmond by the way of the Wilderness and the Rappahannock.

After the week of fighting on the battlefield, where Hooker had fought before—where the rattle of shot and the boom of musketry was heard incessantly along the gloomy aisles of the woods, where the smoke of the cannon made the dense thicket of low-growing trees dim as twilight, and no one could penetrate the thick gloom—Lee expected Grant to recross the Rapi-

dan, but to the contrary, he pushed his army by the Confederate right flank toward Spottsylvania. While at this point General Sheridan passed to the rear of the Confederate army, defeated a cavalry force with the loss of their gallant commander, destroyed railroads and harassed the troops.

At the North Anna there was a strong force of rebels, and here it was that the soldiers of the 1st Cavalry, who for some reason had dismounted, were surprised and taken prisoners. Elwell Andros was shot in cold blood after surrendering. J. G. Woodruff, Hubbard, Lewis Davis and others were taken on board the cars and after going about from place to place for a week or more, they landed at Andersonville prison, and for nine months, here and at Milan, Georgia, they dragged out a terrible existence, only three surviving the dreadful ordeal. Placed within this vile stockade, exposed to the fiery heat of the tropic sun, to the pelting rain and the pouring shower, with little or nothing to eat, covered with vermin and clad in rags, the merest forms of men, some of them came up from the prison pens of the South.

In the darkest days of Andersonville, when, with an ingenuity worthy of devils, the managers had arranged the surroundings so that the water these famished people had to drink, was vile with filth, a clear crystal spring sprang from the hillside; at night the horde, panting, dying for pure water, lay down with no hope of such a blessing; in the morning, as they opened their eyes, there it was bubbling from the ground, trickling down the hill, pure and cold, free to all, and where no device of the fiends in power could pollute or take it from them. A divine gift, heaven sent, and saving thousands of lives.

Years have passed over the land since its waters sprang up at Andersonville. The stockade is torn away, a grassy bank shows where it was, and the terrible dead line that ran along by its side. The brook is dry, no trace of hospital remains, the prison yard, where so many tramping feet were wont to tread, is grass grown now. The great cemetery with its numbered graves tells its own story; but lonely and gloomy and silent, there is nothing, to-day, left to speak of this prison as it was; but the spring trickles still mid the long grasses, and bubbles up as clear and plenty, to tell to all visitors the story of its blessing.

The 37th Massachusetts Regiment left Pittsfield in September, 1862. The line, so strong and brave, marched from Camp Briggs, through the cheering throng, listened to the eloquent prayer of Rev. John Todd, as they halted at the village park, and then, after the last good-byes were spoken, were off for the three years' service, stretching in uncertainty before them. Their gala days were over, and the stern necessity of a soldier's life upon them. Mid rain and storm they reached Washington;

surrounded with sick and wounded soldiers, regiment after regiment crowding into the camp already full, with goats and hogs running at large, to share their accommodations, they wrapped their blankets around them and lay down to a soldier's slumbers.

The 37th was assigned to the brigade of Gen. Henry S. Briggs, which formed at that time a part of the defenders of Washington after Lee's first northern invasion, and were soon settled at Camp Chase, on Arlington Heights. Ere the month was finished they were ordered to advance to the support of McClellan, after the battle of Antietam. Then came the displacing of that general, and on the 13th of December, the attempt of Gen. Burnside at Fredericksburg, to storm the works of the Confederates, who, protected by that stonewall which has passed into history, sent their murderous fires into the ranks of the attacking party, until dense masses of men were piled upon the ground, not forty-eight yards from the muzzles of their guns. Probably, for the number of men engaged, there was no battle throughout the war of the rebellion so bloody as this.

In March, 1863, Peter Dooley, Captain of Company K, was discharged on account of an injury. He had been on duty much of the time during the winter, although suffering from trouble in his ankle. He passed from camp hospitals to the front fifteen times, taking under his charge detachments of convalescents numbering hundreds, which he carried through without the loss of a single man by desertion, notwithstanding his own condition which must of necessity have weakened him physically.

The 37th were ordered to break camp in January, 1863, with their regiment, and march for battle. The weather was fine, Burnside had laid his plans with high hopes, expecting to redeem his misfortune at Fredericksburg; but the bright day ended in rain and storm and southern mud, the project was abandoned after a sorrowful march and Burnside was superseded.

Under Hooker, at Chancellorsville, the 37th were in the hottest part of the field, and retreated at night-fall, over the river they had crossed in the morning. Hooker could not cope with the southern general and gave room for General Meade.

The 37th now returned weary and spiritless to the old camping ground, Camp Edwards. The army felt this defeat very seriously, following so soon after Fredericksburg. Victory seemed to crown the banners of the southern army, and, elated with their success, the saucy pickets in gray would call out from within their woody coverts, or from across the running river: "Say, you Yank, when's old Joe Hooker coming over again to take us?"

And now, Lee, flushed with success, started for another northern invasion. The 37th was called upon to report at Washington, and at Gettys-

burg they fought desperately and bravely, receiving from the colonel a compliment, expressive of his admiration at their splendid conduct under the most terrific artillery fire he had ever witnessed. At a sorry cost they had earned the compliment, for six men lay dead or mortally wounded, and twenty-five others had been injured to a greater or less degree. In Company A Towner B. Jenks, of Cheshire, was wounded.

The night of the 3d of July, 1863, was a sad one, and was spent by the soldiers of both the "Blue and the Gray" in looking over the battle field, seeking the wounded friend or striving to allay suffering, that no pen held by human hand can portray. The dreadful heat of the 3d had caused many a sunstroke, and a severe rain storm at night was a blessing to hundreds who were suffering from thirst.

On the 4th, the 37th were ordered to throw up entrenchments, for in their advanced position they would be in danger from the firing of the foe. They had nothing but their hands, their bayonets and their plates to work with.

On the 5th, General Lee began to gather up his broken columns for a return across the Potomac and Rapidan, and the demoralized, retreating foe was followed by the conquering Meade and his men, but was allowed to make the crossing of the river and escape.

At New York City, when threatened by the draft riot of 1863, the 37th was present until the danger was over.

At the battle of Kelly's Ford they distinguished themselves again, and when, in 1864, General Grant was made Commanding-General, reorganized the army and made his strong hand felt from the Mississippi to the sea coast, the 37th was with him at the Wilderness, Spottsylvania and Cold Harbor, and sat down with him before Petersburg, from which place they were sent out on many skirmishes and battles during the year ending in 1865. It was a noble, glorious record that this 37th Massachusetts Regiment won for itself. 'Twas no idle life of camp it lived, but a stirring, soldiers' campaign, ever on the alert, and when Richmond fell, Lee surrendered, Davis was captured and Johnson's forces followed, their work was done and they were at liberty to return to the fair hills of Massachusetts.

By the way of Washington they made their journey, where only the year before they were called to defend that city, when Lee was thundering at her gates. The city welcomed them with a round of applause and good cheer, which was repeated all along the route until they reached their last station.

On the 28th of June, 1865, they were disbanded, and their flag put into the great hall in the State House at Boston. Tattered and torn, riddled with bullet and ball, dimmed by southern storms and dust, stained with blood, but dearer, ten thousand times, than when given to their standard

bearer, fresh and unsullied, for it told a tale of honor and glory. Colonel Oliver Edwards, of Springfield, was commander of this regiment; made brigadier general May 10th, 1865.

The 49th regiment was officered by Col. W. F. Bartlett, and was mustered largely in western Massachusetts. D. B. Foster, of Cheshire, was First Lieutenant in Company C, and many of the men were from this town. They were sent to Camp Banks, Louisiana, and during the year of 1863, volunteers were called upon in the attack of Port Hudson, and were in a storming party at that time. The regiment bore the ordeal through which they passed with unflinching bravery. Sixteen of their number were killed and many wounded. This regiment went out in 1862, and reached home again in August, 1863.

There were enlistments of individuals in various other regiments. (See names in Appendix.)

In 1863, Mr. David Prince moved into Cheshire and has been constantly employed in building, earning his well-known reputation for doing thorough, and excellent work, while many of our pleasantest homes bear testimony to his skill.

In 1864 the Cheshire Railroad depot burned, but as there were no lives lost and the dwelling was replaced in better shape than before by the railroad company, it was no loss to the town.

## CHAPTER XI.

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FROM 1867—1884.

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CHEESE FACTORIES. MASONIC LODGE. STORES. BAPTIST CHURCH. HOTEL. METHODIST CHURCH. CATHOLIC CHURCH. DEATH OF PROMINENT MEN. DR. THAYER. DR. MASON. TELEGRAPHY. NEW COMERS. FORGES. WATER CO. BERKSHIRE GLASS SAND CO. BUSINESS CHANGES. NATURAL CAVE. SUMMER RESORTS. CLUBS.

In 1863 the excitement of the day in the dairying business, namely, cheese factories, reached Cheshire. The Graylock factory was put up at Pumpkin Hook, built by individual efforts.

A stock company was formed in 1876. At the National Dairy Association held in the city of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, December 5, 1882, the cheese made at this factory took the first premium, thus holding the reputation made by the town in the days of Thomas Jefferson.

In 1866 the land for the big reservoir was bought (under an act of legislature) by manufacturing companies; 1,000 acres were flooded and necessitated the moving of the lower road. It was finished in 1869.

In 1867 of this decade John and David Cole entered the mercantile business in the store on the hill under the firm name of Cole Brothers.

In 1868 F. F. Petitchlere built the cheese factory at the village. He brought the water from the brook to supply the factory's needs, and operated it for one year. In 1869 it burned down. It was rebuilt the same year and purchased by a stock company, by whom it has been carried on until the present time.

In 1868 a Masonic lodge was organized at the village bearing the name of "The Upton Masonic Lodge." After a time the society bought Mechanics' Hall. Repaired and fitted over, it took the name of Masonic Hall. The Masons furnished the upper floor for their own use. It was a fine commodious room for their meetings and entertainments. The lower floor they converted into two stores. One they rented to John Murphy, who opened the first drug store of Cheshire.

Sometime in 1867, Dr. L. J. Cole commenced lay services in the Third church, expecting to secure a pastor at an early date.

A fine choir was formed, who with great thoughtfulness and apparent interest attended service with unflagging zeal, doing so much, by the fine music they afforded, to make the exercises pleasant, and by their example to draw others to the church worship, that it was comparatively easy for their brother to sustain the duties resting upon him. So the work commenced for a few Sundays stretched over into 1868, and a full year was counted before a settled pastor was found, during which time the united labor and expression of pleasant feelings were of such a decided character as to be remembered ever after by the temporary preacher and his people.

In 1868 the temperance movement broke out with considerable force. A Good Templar's Lodge was organized with its secrets, signs and counter-signs, its pass-word and regalia. It did a good work, inasmuch as it brought a flock of young people within its circle. We find Harrison and Werden Brown following their trade as carpenters, and many of the finest buildings in the county bear testimony to their skill; Rollin, son of Harrison, is also engaged in the same occupation.

In 1868 Rev. E. T. Hunt took charge of the Third church as its pastor, and soon after opened a school at the parsonage for the education of boys. A school that was well attended and sustained during his stay in Cheshire until 1870. At this time Rev. H. A. Morgan took the place with the parsonage, and Mr. Hunt leaving town the school was broken up.

In 1875 Rev. R. D. Fish from Nantucket, looking for a field of labor away from the salty breezes, visited Cheshire, and a feeling of mutual admiration resulted in the stay of Mr. Fish with the Third church for the next five years.

In 1880 Rev. George M. Preston commenced his work among the people, filling the pulpit of the Lanesboro Baptist Church every alternate Sabbath day. Some interest of more than ordinary power was manifested in 1882 under his teachings, and a few additions made to the church.

Rev. Mr. Preston supplied the people at Stafford's Hill, preaching in the school house until 1884, when his services were required every Sabbath at Lanesboro, and Dr. Cole took his place at the Hill, where the glebe land profits provided preaching through the fine weather in the house not far from the site of the old church, around which such peculiar and interesting associations linger. During this decade the Third church made some improvements in their church building; changing the basement into a suit of rooms, comprising kitchen, dining-room and conference-room. On the main floor the choir seats were removed to the opposite end of the audience-room.

The Methodist church received at the appointment of the Conference in



1870, Elder W. W. Foster; in 1873, Rev. W. B. Osgood; in 1876, Rev. Mr. Dow; in 1879, Revs. Thompson and Lee; in 1881, Rev. Mr. Elliot; in 1883, Mr. Hobbs, and after a few months, as he did not belong to the Conference, he was removed and Rev. R. J. Davies appointed in his place.

The Catholic people continued their services in the Universalist house, until in 1869 they were able to erect their own church building. This edifice is one that is an ornament to the town, and was completed in the summer of 1869, and on the 8th of August consecrated for worship. Here they have held regular services. Every Sabbath morning these church doors are opened and the pews occupied, in rainy weather as well as in fine. Here at the font the little ones have been christened and signed with the Holy Cross. At the chancel rail the bride has knelt, and upon the bier the dead have lain, lighted by the tall, dim candles for a little ere they are borne to the last resting place. A holy spot to its worshipers, endeared by all the tender associations of life. Father Purcell was their rector until October, 1875, then Adams and Cheshire were made one parish, with Father McCort as rector until his death in 1880, when Father Moran succeeded. In 1884 he went to Ireland and the pulpit and confessional were filled by different priests until September, when he returned, welcomed by his charge.

In 1868 Peter Fairfield set up a forge on Main street, and C. Dawly one at Scrabbletown. In 1883 William Pomeroy succeeded Mr. Fairfield. Mr. Blair carried on a carriage shop during this era.

In 1868 J. N. Richmond made a business move that did much toward building up and improving the village. He bought the farm and dwelling of the successors of Capt. Brown. He surveyed the farm and laid it out in village lots, many of which he soon sold. Streets were cut through the meadows and along the intervale where in 1814 the English soldiers played at foot ball and the militia captains drilled their soldiers.

In the same year that Murphy took the drug store E. F. Nickerson opened a grocery in the block, which he occupied the most of the time until 1884, when upon his death Mr. Earl Ingalls re-opened the grocery store. Mr. Ingalls was a former resident of the town, and at one time was principal of the High school.

In 1869 Mr. H. C. Bowen received the appointment as postmaster, and the office removed to his store, where it still remains. When in 1875 Mr. Bowen bought an interest in the tannery at the Richardson grounds E. F. Nickerson took the store of H. C. Bowen. In 1876 this arrangement was dissolved and Mr. Bowen took his store again and carried on grain and coal business in addition; also running at the tannery ground a mill for feed, while Mr. Nickerson returned to the store in the Masonic block.

In 1869, Cheshire received again some additions to its church and society

in the families of Messrs. Nathan, Adam and Stephen Harkness, all of whom were from Adams. They came to Cheshiré to make for themselves pleasant homes, and to unite with the church and its interests. In Mrs. Nathan Harkness the village can boast a lineal descendant of the famous John Alden and the beautiful Priscilla, who is noted the wide world around by the arch words which the poet Longfellow has put upon her lips:

“Why don't you speak for yourself, John?”

Mrs. Harkness is the sixth generation behind her illustrious ancestor. The Harkness family was a Quaker family and settled originally at Adams.

In 1870 a large and commodious school house was erected in the eastern part of the village at a cost of \$15,000, which accommodated all of the children in the different departments, and is a graded school. The old school house was appropriated to the uses of a town hall.

Miss Jennie Martin taught a select school prior to this, and closed it only when the graded school began.

The Captain Brown house with its riven clapboards was refitted and in 1870 sold for a hotel. Mrs. Olin kept a temperance hotel a few months, then was succeeded by Perry Perkins. Frank Jenks was its third proprietor, and under the name of the Hoosac Valley House won a reputation for the orderly, neat manner in which it was kept, as well as for the prodigies in cooking that were provided for the table by the deft fingers of his wife and daughter. Mr. Holmes succeeded Mr. Jenks. Mr. Mehrer, from New York City, was its next proprietor, followed by Frank J. Jenks, a genial host, and one attentive to his guests, so that his rooms are filled. This hotel is an inviting place in summers days. The front door massive and deep swings open, the high verandas looking over village and stream, gay-colored flowers adorn and brighten the entrance steps. Large, square and old-fashioned it stands, stately and imposing yet, one of the representative houses of Cheshire.

Turning north from this building, at the head of Main street, one was confronted by the Wolcott tavern, bearing the air of taking life comfortably, but with foot-worn steps and entrance hall ante-dating the century.

1850 Felix Petitelere, a boy of scarcely twelve years, a stranger and a traveler only just from France, entered Cheshire on the evening train. Inquiring for a hotel he was directed to the Wolcott house and given for a lodging room a front chamber. He probably slept soundly after the day's journey, little dreaming that he was occupying a room where sixteen years later he would be master of all the surroundings. He bought the place in 1866, and in 1869 he tore down the store and rebuilt the house, making of it a spacious private residence. This was another old landmark preserved

with generous care, but, which from this time appears in a new dress. Vases of flowers stand where the tall sign post used to swing, and deep bay windows have taken the place of the small panes that overlooked the drive-way and the village street.

In 1873 Noble K. Wolcott, who was reared in Cheshire and connected with its business through his early life, died at his home, the homestead of the Wolcotts. This man was always successful in his investments and amassed a large fortune. He married late in life and died without children. He was the last of Moses Wolcott's family. The home fell to Mrs. Noble Wolcott and to Mrs. Fisk, a niece of Mrs. Wolcott and grand-daughter of William Wolcott, whose name is often seen on the town records in early days.

A little later Luther Brown, who had fallen heir to the river meadows and the intervals owned originally by Capt. Brown, died suddenly at his home. The family being south the home was broken up. He was soon followed by R. C. Brown, whose pleasant, kindly face and friendly interest in all who sought his advice, caused him to be remembered sorrowfully by a large crowd of friends gathered through years of daily meeting.

J. N. Richmond, whose name has often been used upon these pages, after selling the lots on the fields that he had added to the village, went to Illinois, where he died three months later. Cheshire was bereft indeed in losing so many of her sons during this decade. Warner Farum, prominent as a town officer and a man of sterling worth, died a few months previous.

In 1873 George Browning opened a harness shop, and being a good workman he supplied a need that had long been felt.

In 1873 the mill of Dean & Martin burned, but was rebuilt at once. In 1881 Mr. George Martin left the mill on account of gradually failing health. A slow and insidious disease was undermining his life, and in 1882 in spite of the loving home circle and the deep interest of friends with which he was hedged about, notwithstanding the earnest wishes and prayers for his recovery to health again, he went down to the grave mourned and regretted by all who knew him. J. B. Dean continued the business sawing lumber, lathes and shingles, making barrels, barrel-heads, staves, etc. Connected with the mill is also a department where grains are ground for feed. In 1883 George Z. Dean bought the interest of J. B. Dean in the store on Main street, and W. B. Dean the mill interests, which he carries on as before.

During this epoch in 1874 the Farnum Brothers commenced the manufacture of lime at Muddy Brook. This is quite a large industry, giving employment and helps the town, as they use many barrels and ship their lime abroad.

Although telegraphy had made rapid strides since Morse first secured the favors of the powers at Washington for his wires and mode of working

them, Cheshire had never had an office established within its borders until 1876. Prior to this date any person desiring to send a dispatch to a friend was compelled to go to Adams or Pittsfield. No matter how great the haste, or how urgent the need, the long ride must be taken first, the message forwarded, and if an answer was required the time until its arrival spent as patiently as possible, then the homeward ride followed. This was felt a great inconvenience. Sometimes an important item was dispatched to Pittsfield, reaching there at an early hour in the morning, but could not cover the last ten miles and reach its destination until the morning train time, and it could go as mail matter.

In 1876 the wires were laid through Cheshire, the posts put up, an office opened at Mr. H. C. Bowen's store, with Miss Julia Bowen as operator. The office is now at the depot and Mr. Marshall Jenks attends to it. In 1883 Mr. Towner Jenks, who had lost his foot in the battle of Gettysburg and was an intense sufferer from it, found that he could not attend to the duties of the situation as station agent and resigned the position after a long term of service. Mr. Marshall Jenks succeeded to the place, Edwin Brown taking the position of baggage master.

In the beginning of the year 1875 the inhabitants of the village depended wholly upon springs and wells for a supply of water, and during the dry season when some of these failed many families were obliged to go quite a little distance to obtain it for daily use. In case of fire there was little or no protection, and the question of a good water supply began to be strongly agitated. Our enterprising and public spirited fellow townsmen Messrs. R. A. Burget and F. F. Petitelere proposed that a stock company be formed and the water brought from a mountain brook above the Kitchen, which, fed entirely by large springs, would furnish pure water in necessary quantity for the whole village. Their first efforts in this direction met with some opposition, and grave doubts were expressed as to the feasibility of obtaining enough water during the dry season to warrant the attempt and expenditure. But persistent effort generally carries the day, and bending every energy to the task, after weeks of argument and urging they convinced the doubting ones of the expediency of the project, and the company was incorporated by act of the legislature under the name of the Cheshire Water Company.

Section first of the charter reads: "Richard A. Burget, Felix F. Petitelere and George Martin, their associates and successors are made a corporation under the name of the Cheshire Water Company for the purpose of supplying the town of Cheshire with pure water, etc." The above named gentlemen were also chosen directors, and as soon as the weather would allow the work began, and was pushed vigorously until its completion in the early fall gave to

our little town an inexhaustible supply of pure water, second to none in the state, with a pressure of 120 pounds to the square inch, thus furnishing effective protection against fire. The pipes were all of cast iron and laid below the frost line, so that very little trouble from leakage has arisen. At first the pipes were only laid through that portion of the village west of the railroad, but later they were extended to supply a portion of Scrabbletown, and a few years after a further extension supplied the Tannery grounds with water.

During the years following the purchase of the iron furnace by the Richmond Iron Company its progress was upward. The deposit of iron ore was found extending in different directions, and unlike other deposits on both sides of the valley. The limestone is found but seldom among the Hoosacs, and the quartz rarely among the Tagconics. The town holds upon her own soil the treasure of fine iron ore, a treasure which in a way outranks gold and silver, as the intelligence and advancement of a race toward civilization has always been marked by its use and knowledge of iron. Much of the ore used at the furnace is mined at Richmond, where the deposits are rich. The iron manufactured at the Cheshire furnace is second to none in the country. It is employed in the construction of the great guns at South Boston. The greater share of the time since 1863 they have been in operation, save when idle for repairs. With the ups and downs that follow the iron market all mills are sometimes forced to close for a few months on account of an over supply, or some similar condition, which is unfortunate for the town and the men employed at the works, but denotes no lack of prosperity on the part of the operators. In 1884 the iron furnace was closed for the summer.

The Gordon Sand Bed increased in its works and gradually enlarged its borders, adding other beds, which were developed and industriously worked. In 1875, upon the death of the former agent, R. C. Brown, F. F. Petitelere was secured as agent and took charge of the works. He went at the work of developing the sand beds and enlarging the business with all of his energy.

In 1876 a building was erected for washing and storing the sand. It was 110 feet long by 40 wide. This same year another building was put up for the accommodation of an elevator and a pump, the latter worked by water power used to throw the water from the pit. A track was laid to the mouth of the pit where the sand was received from the elevator. Thirty-three thousand dollars were expended at this time in improvements.

In 1877 George W. Gordon died, and the Gordon Sand Bed was managed by a new company under the name of the Berkshire Glass Sand Mining Company, F. F. Petitelere, Agent. In 1879 it changed proprietors again and settled down firmly under the name of the Berkshire Glass Sand Com-

pany. In 1880 a second building was erected for washing and storing, and in 1882 another was added. A cooper shop is operated where the barrels required in the business are constructed.

In 1881 another sand bed was opened south of the village and a building for washing and storing put up. Here a side track runs in and the barrels when loaded for market are rolled from the platform of the building on to the car. In 1882 the Berkshire Glass Sand Company consolidated with that of L. L. Brown & Son. In 1883 some chasers were put in for crushing the sand; these are two huge circular stones run by steam, and prepare the sand for market in different grades of coarseness, according to the following brands: 12, 18, 24, 40, 40XXX and 100.

The quartz is also used by this company in making the best silica fire brick known. The company are now erecting a large building in which to manufacture them, and expect to be able to compete successfully with the best imported brick; the Cheshire brick having stood fire tests which melted the foreign brick. With teamsters, coopers and all, seventy-five men are employed in the different departments. So the Berkshire Glass Sand Company has gone steadily on stretching out its arms, its trenches and beds have invaded the sleepy borough of Scrabbletown and undermined now and then a garden, here and there a house. Adding new machinery and conveniences they dig, wash, crush, barrel and ship their wares in the most improved and systematic manner with the greatest ease and rapidity all over the world.

And this deposit of sand, white as snow, and lying dormant so long extends along the bed of the river and underneath our old farms, an exhaustless pile, which came to the surface when needed, as petroleum bubbled up from the earth in floods just at the time when whaling ships came home from north sea voyages empty, and sailors declared the whale crop disappearing, while croakers on shore looked forward to a time, speedily approaching, when the nation would be forced to sit in darkness because there was no oil. When man grows older on the world he will know that at the time of need for any discovery the train of circumstances to lead up to it is laid and the discovery waiting at the door, for all history tells the story.

This sand is unequalled by any yet discovered, and won a gold medal at the London Exposition and a bronze at the Centennial. Cars go from the station daily loaded with it for distant points. At Boston it is used by the New England Glass Company, the Union, Boston & Sandwich Glass Company, and a score more, in manufacturing everything that is dainty and beautiful from a tiny wine cup to an exquisite set of cut glass, for which you may pay half a thousand dollars. The following is a copy of the analysis:

STATE ASSAYER'S OFFICE, NO. 4 STATE STREET, }  
BOSTON, January 13, 1880. }

*Berkshire Glass Sand Company:*

GENTLEMEN: I have analyzed a sample of white sand received from Felix F. Petitclerc, Supt., with the following results. One hundred parts contain:

Pure silica,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	99.78
Alumina and lime,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.22
Total,	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100.00

This is remarkably pure silica in the form of white sand. It is excellent for use in the best of flint glass and for chemical purposes. Respectfully,

S. DANA HAYES,

State Assayer and Chemist, Mass.

In 1876, The Cheshire White Quartz Sand Co. was organized; J. B. Dean, President; George Z. Dean, Treasurer. They have two mills, and crush the rock without washing.

Lovain Rider and Foster Brothers kept a meat market on Main street, giving up the business in 1878 to Charles Cummings who opened on Main street a meat market and grain store. In 1880 Mr. Ed. Beers went into the butcher business, keeping a market in the village, but doing a brisk trade from his cart in adjoining towns.

In 1877 the Coles all entered a partnership in the tannery business under the name of Cole's Company.

In 1878 Dr. D. E. Thayer commenced the practice of his profession in Cheshire. A graduate of the Chicago Medical College, he was well up in his practice from actual experience, both as a student and a practitioner. He has always had an extensive ride. Dr. Bliss left town and Dr. Thayer and Dr. Phillips have been the only resident physicians until Dr. Ira Mason returned from his western home to live among his early friends once more. Other physicians sometime ride in from adjoining towns, but none beside care to come and stay. Dr. Mason belongs to the family of Mr. James Mason, who was an early settler. The doctor is an unquestionable Mason, both his father and his mother were members of the Mason family. His father came to Cheshire a young man, and had no home in town; his mother was daughter of the James Mason who settled at the Kitchen, and after their marriage made Adams their home. From this same family descended the minister, Almond Mason.

In 1881, the drug store was newly equipped and rented by H. J. Darby of Adams. He remained its occupant until 1884, when becoming interested in some experiments in brick making that were being developed by the Berkshire Glass Sand Co., he went into the new business, and Mr. H. F. Shaw of Dalton, relieved him from the store rental.

In 1883 Mr. Guy Preston received the appointment from this Congressional District as cadet to West Point. He bore with honor the primary

examination in 1883 and the second one at West Point in the summer of 1884, and was admitted to the military school, to the drill of books and war, in camp and in field.

In 1884 a gentlemen's club and reading room was established. The leading papers are provided for the tables, debates are sometimes carried on, games are at hand, the rooms always warm and bright afford a pleasant place for both young and old to spend an evening; a place which young men without a home may find preferable to the bar-room or saloon.

In the winter of 1884 the excitement concerning skating rinks ran along the towns from point to point like a prairie fire, and Cheshire did not escape the contagion. G. Z. Dean opened a rink which was well and faithfully sustained during the season. Some fancy skating was provided and an occasional tournament given.

In the spring of 1884 Miss Eva Cummings opened a millinery store with ladies' furnishing goods in addition. Mr. George Stowell began to operate a green house. It was during this decade that Cheshire began to attract attention as a favorite resort for summer tourists. The scenery is picturesque and romantic, the mountain breezes are cool all through the heated term, there are no finer roads in the world than are found through this valley from south to north, hard and smooth and even they form strong attractions for pleasure driving, while the varied and charming scenery is a feast for the eye. There are many points in the near vicinity for strangers to visit that afford a pleasant day. Potter's Mountain, Graylock, Pontoosuc Lake, the famed Savoy House, Rolling Rock, Big Rock, are some of these spots.

Upon the farm of the Northups, a farm owned by this family since the first Northup fought the wolves and built his log house in the early years of the settlement, is a cave which is a natural curiosity. The entrance or mouth is so small and overgrown by bush and bramble as to scarcely attract the notice of the passer-by, but after admission is gained a hall or narrow way leads to different chambers of good size. In some of these rooms pictures and words have been cut into the rock, and upon the floor are scattered pots, a knife or two and some dishes, showing evidently that it has been occupied at some time either by hunters or parties in hiding.

Mrs. R. C. Brown commenced the movement of inviting summer travelers to the village by throwing open to those who desired a home for the weeks of summer, outside of the city, with its hot pavements and rows of wall, her own house on the hill with its spacious rooms, its wide halls and pleasant verandas. The giant trees in the outlying park break the hot rays of the sun, cast their heavy shade where the games of croquet and lawn tennis are stretched, and shield the players at their sport, or the invalid and the more quiet as they rest upon some rustic seat. Taken together, house,



grounds and table it is one of the first in favor among the places offering board to the city strangers.

Then there is the Hoosac Valley House with a crystal brook tumbling over the rocks, a little distance in the rear, a huge clump of trees tossing their crowns over the roof, and a lawn where the cider mill used to stand when the Captain was master of the place. This is another desirable home, made so by its proprietors.

Prospect Farm, is situated on the eastern hills in the midst of the most ravishing prospect in the whole town. Well and appropriately is it named—Prospect Farm. The proprietors are generous, their table is loaded with all the good things the farm produces in profusion. Children play upon the grass in the field and ride up from the meadows on the big loads of hay; they follow the milkman to the stanchion or milk-yard with their cups and have them filled with the sweet foaming milk. There is no trouble there; city mothers need not throw away any of the little ones before engaging board at Prospect Farm. There is room there for all of them.

On the western hills a new house, nicely fitted up by Mrs. Daniel Wood, offers a home that is cool, quiet and healthful, with all the charms of a country farm life.

At the Kitchen Mrs. Nathan Mason has a large, convenient house just by the brook—a picturesque and pleasant home.

In the village, on Main street, is the home of Mrs. George Martin, a delightful place for any who desire to share a neat, tasty home made cheery by young ladies and agreeable surroundings, both within and without.

The selling of berries is quite an industry among the children of the village. Rising at an early hour the willing feet and busy fingers are employed tramping over the fields to the berry-patch, and picking the shining berries in their turn—the strawberry hidden in the long meadow grasses or ripening upon the sunny pasture hill, the raspberry or blackberry later in the season; filling huge pails they take the cars to Adams or Pittsfield, where they find a ready market, at a good price, for their fruit and return home with empty pails and a little pile of change tied up in the corner of their handkerchiefs. During the six weeks, commencing with July 1st and ending at the mid August days, 739 tickets were sold to children going to Adams alone.

The Good Templar Lodge did its work, and as an organization it was abandoned as the years passed by bringing with them the crusade—the Women's Christian Temperance Union and other orders. In 1884, the W. C. T. U. stands at the head, and from Maine to Florida, from Boston Bay to Puget Sound, it rules the hour and preaches prohibition across the continent.

A reading club is carried on successfully in the village, having been in existence for a number of years and meeting on every Friday evening during the winter months.

The Public Library has increased in strength until in the present decade its future outlook is very bright. Funds have been raised in a variety of ways with which to purchase new books. Many volumes have been given by different individuals. E. D. Foster has never lost his interest or relaxed his vigilance, and hundreds of books are on the shelves that could never have been obtained without his assistance and personal gifts. John C. Wolcott also has presented many volumes to the library. Some sets comprising the complete works of an author. The little building is full now to overflowing. Every case and shelf and place that ingenuity can devise has been piled high with books. A fund is in reserve as a nucleus, around which the library board and friends of the institution hope to gather sufficient to erect a suitable building. When this is done and a room pleasantly finished with appropriate surroundings of tables and desks, with book cases convenient and suitable for the preservation of their contents, it will be the crowning jewel of this Berkshire village. It contains now 2,370 volumes, with Miss Emma Martin as their custodian.

In 1884 Cheshire sustained a serious loss in the death of an efficient and valued town man, E. F. Nickerson. One of its business men for years, ever honorable and upright, he was a kind friend and neighbor; but he was far more than this to the town. A man of education he was always interested in the schools, had served for many successive years on the Board of Education, and was looked upon as authority in all matters pertaining to these interests. It seemed almost impossible to fill his place.

Approaching Cheshire from the south, and just beyond Meeting-House Hill at the north, one obtains the best views of the village, or rather of its chimneys, roofs and spires, nestled among the hills, half hidden by the trees. The spirit of inquiry has hovered over this ancient and interesting town during the year 1884, and a strong desire been evident to have its history, traditions and romances hunted up and put on record.

Settled as it was over a century and a quarter ago by an active, sensible, energetic people it has borne through all the years of its existence a moral and intellectual character. Its climate is fine and salubrious, one that is conducive to perfect health and great longevity, of the latter statement the moss-grown, storm-stained stones of blue and gray that stand in its old scattered burying grounds are *prima-facie* evidence. Aged 93 is the frequent record on these outposts at the extreme limits of life's journey. The bracing mountain air stimulates the mental vigor as well as the physical health.

It is a town that has kept well up with the times. Situated near enough the great centers to keep pace with their literary culture and partake of their many and varied opportunities. It has been far enough remote to escape the evils of its dissipations, and has ever maintained a self-sustaining and self-respecting inward life. It is somewhat rich in family reminiscences; occupies, in a certain measure, historic ground, and possesses many elements of local interest.

Cheshire is not specially fortunate in its lawyers that have remained to shine and adorn the town, but it has produced as many lawyers, doctors and ministers and sent them out for the foray and battle of life as any other town of its size on this or any other continent.

Its streets in 1884 are broad and long and old-fashioned, and at friendly distances along them are planted its houses—the modest, humble ones, the antique buildings of early times and some pretentious ones of modern date.

With its four churches, school house and town hall, its post-office and stores, where dry goods, groceries and hardware dwell in harmony together, in addition to the more distinctive ones, with its shops where various branches of business are pursued, its miniature green house, its mills, sand beds and lumbering interests, the signs of business are seen, and its busy hum goes on year after year, but its greatest interest lingers around the vine-clad homes—the dwelling houses with their body-guard trees and apple orchards as back grounds. Entering them one often finds an air of gentility, and is pretty sure to see some reminder of the foremothers and forefathers. Sometimes these houses are a perfect museum of antiquarian possessions. Not filled with Sevres china, or ewers and platters after Palissy, but on side board or dresser stand cups, saucers, plates and platters, sugar bowls and creamers, owned as early as 1750 by some grand-aunt or great grand-mother, and going back—how far no one knows; of that delightful tinge of pink, blue or mulberry that belongs to the primitive time and costs a small fortune over the counter of a china store. Tea urns and bowls, so dainty, of such ancient device as to cause a hunter after these relics to spend sleepless nights of longing to own them. Chairs and pictures brought from “Down Country” through the forests by the pioneers in 1767. Spinning wheels and reels, and in some cases the low ceiling and polished beams of the last century may be seen. While some residences are perfect ware-houses of souvenirs from preceding generations, every one of them has a tea cup, plate, platter or punch bowl that has connected with it some tradition of interest.

Among the greatest curiosities of porcelain, among the rarest bits of old china and ancient silver are those in the possession of Mrs. William Card and her daughters at Pumpkin Hook, and Mrs. Julius Hammond, daughter

of Squire Ezra Barker. Perhaps the most ancient and quaintest article owned by the latter is a set of knives and forks brought from England with the Barkers and descending from generation to generation, a round-shaped blade in the knives and three tines in the forks, with a green handle of horn almost transparent. Pieces of pewter and silver are treasured that glittered upon the dresser of Squire James Barker as long as he lived, and were no doubt among the household goods which in 1773 he shipped to Providence, there to set out with wife and children for the Lanesborough settlement in the wilds of Berkshire. Upon his death they fell to Ezra, his son.

These silent memorials of Colonial times are scarcely known beyond their own immediate owners, but are of deepest interest and should always be treasured with greatest care, for, as the years sweep on, and this town with its history and traditions and legends of the past is entering upon the second century of its existence, their value will increase in a geometrical ratio.

In closing this chapter we must not fail to mention the Cheshire Shoe Manufacturing Company, which has recently rented the old tannery property, and transformed the formerly deserted rooms into scenes of busy industry. Where, at the close of 1884, all was silent, save the steady whirl of the grist-mill, in May, 1885, is heard the buzz of machinery, the pounding of countless hammers, the tread of hurrying feet, and our quiet town heartily welcomes this addition to its business enterprises. They have one hundred and twelve people now in their employ, and the building will admit of a working force of three hundred. Population of the town in 1880, 1,537; valuation 1884, \$692,090.

## CHAPTER XII.

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### SKETCH OF REV. JOHN LELAND.

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So thoroughly interwoven is the name of John Leland with the New Providence settlement, and the town of Cheshire that succeeded it, no history of them would be quite complete without a short biography of this great and good man.

From commencement to close, the story of this life is full of interest. The town can ill afford to lose the memory of its strong men. Every manly life is valuable beyond computation, and this one, so upright and so powerful, prolonged to more than four-score years, and given to the public service with such humble zeal and fidelity, takes on a dignity that demands our homage. He came to the Cheshire church when in its very infancy: he came, a preacher of the gospel, to labor for more than sixty years; to leave a name ever to be pronounced with reverence; to leave words and sermons ever to be remembered by a rapturous throng of admirers.

Through the years following 1754 there lived in the village of Grafton, forty miles inland from the Puritan city of Boston, a boy called by his friends, John Leland. Leland, the father, was a man in humble position, and the childhood of John passed as was the fashion of childhood among rural folk at that early period—a period when the perfect hush of primeval nature rested upon the fair forests of northern Berkshire. Century after century the mornings had dawned upon its picturesque solitudes, and the setting sun been reflected in its ponds and streams.

Leland's birth was coeval with the breaking out of that cruel war invoked by eastern monarchs in 1754. Braddock had not yet sailed from the shores of England, and George Washington, scarcely at his majority, was wending his way toward the fords of the Monongehala. Among the first of Leland's remembrances were some of the atrocities committed during this war. His thirst for knowledge was intense, and he went, almost in his babyhood, to a village dame who taught him so well that at five years he could read the Bible with ease and fluency. He was not handsome, and did not attract his teachers or mates, as a rule; his manners were stiff and rustic. Although not an Adonis in early days, in later life his mild hazel eye

beamed with an eloquent, winning light, and the burning words that fell from his lips seemed to invoke a magnetic circle that, like the touch of the magnet, drew every one within it. It was often said of him, "Had John Leland chosen politics for a vocation he would have reached the presidential chair at the White House."

In his youth he was gay, wild and flighty, fond of revels and devoted to dancing; but, in the midst of this merriment, a voice spoke to him from the clouds, declaring that "he was not about the work he had to do." Hitherto he had been full of ambition and was no idler, although a lover of fun and frolic. He had planned to make a career for himself by becoming a lawyer. Knowledge he sought eagerly for its own sake, and his fertile intellect could never rest; so, when the change came and he accepted the call from the skies, all, familiar with his history, remember how ardently he began and continued the work he had found to do; with what enthusiasm he labored for the conversion of those around him, and the God-given power he held that swayed and carried with him great congregations as well as individuals. His accents rarely fell upon indifferent ears.

Leaving his youth and young manhood, with their frolics and romance, he married Sally Devine of Hopkinton, and, in this drama of his life, repeats, somewhat, the experience of another John who lived in the Plymouth colony during the first years of its existence.

Amid the rollicking and fun-loving spirits of this rural circle, Sally Devine of Hopkinton seems to have been a prime favorite, a friend of Leland's had bestowed his society upon the fair Sally, and been captivated by her manifold charms, being rather shy, like Macbeth in that grewsome scene at the castle of Inverness, he had never been able to "screw his courage to the sticking place," and put in spoken words the story of his love, so he wrote to his charmer of his adoration, asked her to become his wife, and sent the missive down to Hopkinton by John Leland who chanced to be going that way. The latter carried it and faithfully delivered it into the hands of Sally Devine; but to the indictment of love for the girl the subject of this chapter would be forced to plead guilty. Whether at the suggestion of Sally, or of his own free will, no one knoweth, but the conclusion is palpable that the word was spoken, and Sally Devine became Mrs. John Leland, while the bashful suitor, like Captain Miles, was left to nurse the tofngs in the chimney corner, or fight Indian wars. Directly after this marriage they went to Virginia, and at Mount Poney in Culpepper they joined the Church. Elder Leland was ordained, preached from this pulpit half the time, and spent the remainder doing the work of an evangelist.

The *Baptist Weekly* gives the following account of the ordination services: "The council, consisting of three staunch Calvinists, was called, the

day appointed for the ordination arrived, and with it came a multitude of people to witness the ceremony. The work was divided among the several presbyters: one was to ask the usual questions concerning his faith and call; another was to offer up an ordination prayer, and another was to deliver the charge to the pastor and the church. Leland took his seat long before they appeared and, resting his arms on his knees and burying his face in his hands, awaited their movements.

“The presbyter appointed to conduct the examination at last began:

“Moderator. ‘Brother Leland, it becomes my duty, according to previous arrangement, to ask you a few questions upon the subject of your faith, and in reference to your call to the ministry.’

“‘Well, brother,’ said Leland, slowly raising his head, ‘I will tell you all I know,’ and down went his head into his hands again.

“M. ‘Do you not believe that God chose his people in Christ before the foundation of the world?’

“Leland, looking up. ‘I know not, brother, what God was doing before he began to make this world.’

“M. ‘Brother Leland, do you not believe that God had a people before the foundation of the world?’

“L. ‘If he had, brother, they were not our kind of folks. Our people were made out of dust, you know, and before the foundation of the world there was no dust to make them out of.’

“M. ‘Do you believe, Brother Leland, that all men are totally depraved?’

“L. ‘No, my brother, for if they were they could not wax worse and worse as some of them do. The Devil was no worse than totally depraved.’

“M. ‘Well, there are other questions that will embrace all these in substance. I will ask whether you do not believe that sinners are justified by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them?’

“L. ‘Yes, brother, provided he will do right himself; but I know of no righteousness that will save a man if he will not do right himself.’

“M. ‘Brother Leland, I will ask you one more question. Do you believe that all the saints will persevere through grace to glory and get home to heaven at last?’

“L. ‘I can tell you more about that, my brother, when I get there myself. Some of them make a very bad start of it here.’

“The presbyter, seeing that the audience was very much amused, proposed to his colleagues that they should retire for a few minutes and consult together. After their return they remarked to the congregation that Brother Leland had not answered their questions as satisfactorily as they could wish; but, as they all knew that he had many eccentricities for which they

should make every allowance; they had concluded, accordingly, to ask him a few questions touching his call to the ministry.

“M. ‘Brother Leland, you believe that God has called you to preach the gospel.’

“L. ‘I never heard him, brother.’

“M. ‘We do not suppose, Brother Leland, that you ever heard an audible voice; but you know what we mean.’

“L. ‘But wouldn’t it be a queer call, brother, with no voice, and nothing said?’

“M. (Evidently confused.) ‘Well! well! Brother Leland, you believe that is your duty to preach the gospel to every creature.’

“L. ‘Ah, no, my brother, I do not believe it my duty to preach to the Dutch, for instance. When the Lord bade the apostles to preach to every creature he taught them how to talk to all sorts of people. He has never taught me to talk Dutch yet.’

“The council retired and reported much to the surprise of Leland who was compelled to submit to ordination. After they had ordained him in due form he said: “Well, brethren, when Peter placed his hands on people, and took them off, they had more sense than before; but you have all had your hands on me, and before God I am as big a fool as ever.”

The Revolutionary war had broken out and was well under way. Leland mingled daily with the people of Virginia, who were descendants of men that had made their settlements at the expense of individuals, not nations. They had shed their own blood, and spent their own fortunes. For themselves they had fought; for themselves had conquered, and believed that it was their right to own and hold the fruits of their endeavors, a sentiment cordially shared by John Leland. Reverence for the divine rights of royalty, or the prerogatives of a titled nobility, had but little place in the mighty mind of Leland, and the burning words for liberty he uttered, the glowing sentences he traced as though with a pen of iron, carried with him the whole country of the wilderness, and County Culpepper. The intellectual Jefferson and the noble Washington did him reverence. When Madison, from his out-look, believed his country to be in danger unless a certain course was pursued, he halted aghast one morning when told by a friend that John Leland was on the opposition side.

“Then I am beaten,” he gasped.

“Yes,” replied his friend, “unless you can convince him. He will go up to the polls with his commanding form and mysterious power, and the rank and file of his counties will follow him in an unwavering line; no power will avail to win one of them. They will watch Leland, and the vote he casts will be the one that they will cast.”



There was little time to lose. Early the following morning, mounted on his thoroughbred horse, the statesman, cabinet officer and future president rode forth on his way to the County of Culpepper. It so chanced that, as the morning advanced, he saw a rider approaching him, and recognizing John Leland, by description, halting, he introduced himself and his business. Together they went over the events of the exciting campaign, and the issues involved. Leland's logic was inexorable; his arguments were strong; he summed up the principles upon which the new order of things would rest, and clung to his opinions. No intellect of the epoch, perhaps, was more powerful; no genius greater for overturning and shaping a contest, although untutored and uncultivated compared to that of the scholarly ambassador before him, trained in all the elegance of the times. But the latter felt its strength, and never in hall of State, on Senate floor or lobby of the House did he select his arguments with greater care, or clothe them in finer eloquence.

Noon fell upon the scene. In their eagerness they dismounted, tethered their ponies, sat down upon a grassy knoll beneath a shading tree, and talked on. The sun went down the western slopes—and still they talked.

Belonging to history as these men do it is desirable to know their characters and manners, as far as possible, and it is not difficult to imagine the picture and note the contrast—a contrast in which neither suffered.

Leland, clad in his home-spun suit; Madison, dressed as courtiers dressed, but with no thought of that on the part of either as they eagerly discussed the vital points in the issue at hand, until just as the sun went down Leland sprang to his feet, extending his hand to Madison, exclaiming:

“You have convinced me at last, you are right; I'll vote for you.”

“Then,” said Madison, shaking eagerly the proffered hand, “I'm elected.”

There was no need to look further after John Leland and his followers. When election day came around they surrounded the polls in a throng and Madison's party won the contest.

It was while living in Virginia that Mrs. Leland was subjected to the greatest hardships of her life. Located in a country infested with tories, whose occupation was devastating towns, plundering houses and taking for their victims defenseless women and unprotected children, in the little house by the roadside Mrs. Leland dare not burn a light that would stream out over the moor and highway, thus attracting these unwelcome marauders to her door; still, it was at night, when the duties of the day were ended and the children in bed, that she must take the necessary stitches for her family, and reel the yarn she spun yesterday. So by a low fire, with windows muffled, keyholes stuffed, and heart whose beatings she could almost

hear in the stillness, she worked for many an hour while her husband was about his Master's work.

One afternoon of the Virginia fall-time, when the preacher was preparing to leave home on a long trip, he was startled by hearing a peculiar noise that proceeded apparently from a side of the room where the chimney was built. While it was an unfamiliar sound it resembled somewhat the buzzing of an immense fly or bee in distress. Search was made at once; every spot examined where by any possibility an insect could be confined. The noise gradually subsided and but little more was thought concerning the matter. The following day Elder Leland was off on his journey, and to him the thought of it never occurred during his absence of six weeks. Not so with his wife. The succeeding day, as four o'clock approached, the buzzing began louder than on the day before. Energetic and determined she made another search, but in vain, and each day the visitant came, a few moments later than on the preceding one, increasing in power and volume until in place of buzzing the sounds were groans, piercing and truly terrific.

It is not difficult to imagine the intense nervous excitement that must have been the result of such an experience, daily repeated, or the dread that must have filled the mind of that lonely mother, as the pendulum in the tall clock swung on and on toward the midnight hour, and they waited breathlessly until the solemn strokes tolled out through the gloom, then the children, in terror, exclaimed: "Oh! the groaner's coming," and, burying their faces in her lap, winding her apron around them, clinging to her, they remained while groan after groan sounded in their ears.

During that six weeks the clock must have ticked off the hours for this woman in a menacing way; the winds must sometimes have blown through the trees while she waited for the guest, scarcely less welcome than Britain's soldiers, and the storm at times beating mercilessly on the roof, but the unwelcome comer never failed, and when the six weeks were ended, it had, by coming some five minutes later every night, reached somewhere about half past twelve. Mrs. Leland cautioned all who knew the tale (for many had been to the house from curiosity, but none had lingered) to say nothing to the minister when he arrived, for she wished to see what impression it would make upon him, and, without any warning or word of preparation, the unearthly noise fell upon his ears. He started up in amazement, inquiring if that had been repeated every night of his absence.

Its usual stay was about ten minutes, and for eight months it made its visits, baffling every effort to fathom the mystery. As often as an investigation was made at the spot from whence it proceeded, with a view of ascertaining if anything was fastened there, it would pass to some other point.

At length, one night at the end of eight months, Leland tried the effects of prayer. Kneeling with his family around him he prayed that if this messenger were a spirit of good he might be emboldened to speak to it, that it might make known its errand and depart; but if an evil spirit, that God would in his mercy bid it to leave and trouble them no more forever. As the words of prayer fell upon the ear they were mingled with the groans and shrieks of the visitor which grew in strength and voice until at the conclusion of Leland's petition, as though in direct answer to it, with one last expiring groan it died away never to return.

This tale, as told by John Leland, is never doubted by any who knew him. His powers of mimicry and imitation were very wonderful, and, says one, "I had often wished to hear this account from the lips of Leland himself, and one evening I told him my desire. He consented to repeat the circumstance provided I would promise not to be frightened. Sitting in a room all aflame with light and cheery brightness, a circle of friends about me, I readily made the promise. Looking at the narrator, listening to his words, knowing that he would imitate the noise: when at length it fell upon my ear, although so well prepared for it, so wierd, so terrific, so unlike any earthly groan was it, that I sprang to my feet, trembling with terror."

"Ha! Ha!" laughed the old man, "I thought you were not going to be afraid."

When, upon one occasion, Elder Leland was traveling and preaching he sent his appointments on in advance:

"One week from Wednesday, Providence permitting, John Leland will be present with the people of Rye and improve from their church pulpit."

After this style the announcements usually were worded, and notice would be extended through the vicinity, with crowded houses as the usual result.

It so happened that he reached Rye (a small hamlet) just at close of the day preceding that of the appointment. He had ridden far on horseback, the day was hot and dusty, so, travel-soiled and weary, he halted at the gate of a substantial farmhouse only a stone's throw away from the meeting-house, and where he had been told he was expected. He alighted from his jaded horse and, approaching the door, inquired if they could accommodate a traveler.

After a scrutinizing look and an exchange of glances between the farmer and his wife, who had both stepped to the door on hearing his application, the farmer replied:

"Why—no—I don't think we can keep you. The fact is we've agreed to take the Great John Leland for two or three days. We can't tell how many there'll be with him."

The dusty traveler told the man of the house that his wants would be very few—a corner in the kitchen, a lunch on the kitchen table, with a bed thrown down anywhere (in the servants' room), would do for him, and on these conditions he was allowed to stay.

By the kitchen table he ate his frugal supper, while the table in an adjoining room was loaded with the savory viands prepared for the expected guest. Servants ran back and forth in haste as the preparations advanced, and to the humble traveler, sitting quietly on a bench by the door, came the fragrant odors from the cooking meats and pies and puddings.

Night came, the evening wore on, and still the Great Leland did not appear. At the hour of the appointment, next morning, the church was thronged, and the feelings of the farmer and his wife can, perhaps, be partially imagined when they beheld the man who had slept in their shed chamber and dined haphazard with their servants, enter the pulpit, and were informed that the great preacher was before them.

Leland's fine intellect, his master power to hold spell-bound those with whom he conversed, commanded for him a prominent place in whatever circle he was thrown. He was naturally shy and shrunk always from meeting the great men of his day; but when once in their society he forgot the feeling as he became interested in the topics discussed, and, lunched on the tide, the words flowed on and on, drawing all around the simple, plainly dressed old man.

Martin Van Buren, Marcus Morton and many another man who occupied places of trust and position has left the main route of travel at Pittsfield or Adams and, taking private carriage, has driven over the hills to seek out the humble home of this man, and spend a few hours with its master, thus doing homage to his genius. His last home, and that longest associated with his name was the low red house upon the western hills beyond the Kitchen.

He wrote his own epitaph, and in the village cemetery, upon a shaft of blue marble which is placed where the driveway sweeps around the great circle, it is engraved:

"Here lies the body of John Leland, who labored sixty-eight years to promote piety, and vindicate the civil and religious rights of all men."

There lies the venerable dust, and there, even now, the reverential tear is dropped by his admirers. It is hard to picture what that day meant to the people of this village when the news came that Leland lay dead, in a neighboring town. Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Chapman, with whom he had made his home, received a message from him of his illness and hastened to his side.

One child alone was permitted to stand by his dying bed, all others were so widely scattered there was no time to gather them. His thoughts

fondly lingered with the wife of his youth and his age, who had ever before been with him in days of sickness. He seemed conscious from the first attack that he should never recover, and with a sense of perfect trust he awaited the summons.

On the 14th of January, 1841, he fell asleep. They carried him back in the teeth of a winter storm; the desolate, frozen fields, the leaden skies, were fit emblems of the desolation that settled over the thousands of hearts made sad by his departure.

There are no perfect men, and no one claims perfection for John Leland. To err is *only* human, and this wise patriot, tender friend and eloquent preacher of the Word, made mistakes, no doubt; but he still lives in the affections of the people here, and the influence he exerted in this town will never be lost. This influence has followed him through the passing generations; it will continue to follow him through those to come, widening and increasing until in that last final day he will meet thousands of his spiritual children on the plains above.



## APPENDIX.

### A CHAPTER OF REFERENCE.

The farms outlying the village of Cheshire have been mentioned in connection with various events that have been narrated on these pages; in this closing chapter a parting glance is taken, and the farms with their present occupants noticed, as such notice will serve as a reference, and may prove of interest when the great chronometer of time shall count off another quarter, or half a century.

Approaching the village from the southern line of the town, the first farm passed is the one bought by Samuel Whipple of Dr. Lyons, and paid for in colonial currency. It is owned by Martin W. Ingalls, and managed by his son George. New buildings have been erected upon it, and it is under fine cultivation.

On a side road, over the hill, is the Coman farm owned by James Wells. This place is well watered, and timbered, with an abundance of fruit, apples, pears and grapes. Grain and grass are grown, sheep-raising made a specialty. No dairy is kept.

On the hill, off from the main road, is the farm owned formerly by Perry Whipple, who succeeded his father, Samuel Whipple, upon it. It is now owned by Brough, who lives there and manages it himself.

The Ora Clark place was purchased more than forty years ago by David Miller, who bought it in 1840 of William Cole and James Cole. March, 1844, he sold it to Robert G. Miller. In 1847 Robert G. Miller sold to Samuel Smith the quartz and sand found upon the farm. Smith in turn disposed of it to the Berkshire Glass Company, and the farm is now owned by Patrick Murphy.

The farm where H. J. Ingalls resided so long is owned by Elisha Prince, a successful farmer. There are 340 acres of surface, upon it is a sand bed. Grass and grain are produced, and an extensive dairy kept.

The land of George Fisher, just off from the main road, numbers 271 acres. It is a dairy farm, and has been occupied by the present owner more than thirty years. The milk from these dairies is taken to the cheese factory at the village of Cheshire. As has been noted, this last farm shows deposits of gold and silver; but the strata and general formation do not belong to that class where veins of precious metal are usually found in sufficient quantity to warrant much outlay in mining, according to the theory of some scientific men.

Upon the summit of the hill leading up from Muddy Brook lies the farm formerly owned by John M. Bliss, Sr. Here, in 1874, the Farnum Brothers came, and entered upon the business of lime burning, which has grown into one of the prosperous industries of the town, employing twenty men or more, upon their works, and affording business for others, in the barrels used for shipping their lime. A railroad flag-station has been established, where freight is taken on and passengers accommodated.

A little distance from this farm, toward the south and on the opposite side of the highway, was the farm where Nathaniel Bliss settled in the early times, a little knoll, hard by the grave yard now seen there, marks the site of the farm-house in which he lived. This land is now merged into that owned by the family of Ira Jenks, the house has long since crumbled away, only a slight depression in the ground shows

the cellar, and a few shrubs and bushes tell where the kitchen garden flourished. Later, Orrin, son of Nathaniel Bliss, lived upon the farm where now P. B. Chadwick resides. This is the southernmost farm referred to by James Barker, and to which he sent some stock by his eldest son prior to his own start for Berkshire in May, 1773.

Next are the Curtis places, father and son. M. L. Curtis lives upon what is known to the present towns-people as the Lewis Walker farm. This place is beautifully located, and is one of the flourishing farms of the town.

The neat and pretty place occupied and owned to-day by Mrs. Roselle Lane and her son, Henry Lane, is the Clark farm, which has for long years been retained by the family of its original owner, and is still in possession of the direct descendants of Mr. Clark.

The Southworth farm, with the same house that was first built still standing, is owned by the sons of Nathaniel Bliss, Jr., and is rented to Edward Purtle. Granville, Clinton, and Milton Bliss occupy the homestead, and not only own the original farm, but have enlarged their borders on all sides of them, taking in a farm here, a ten-acre lot there, a wood land upon some adjoining hillside, gaining and increasing always—always known as growing, thriving farmers. They keep a dairy, make butter, and cut grass and grain.

The farm upon which stands the red house, just beyond the village at the south—the house erected by Squire Ezra Barker, and where he lived at the time of his death, in 1818, is still a fine farm of 592 acres, woodland, meadow, and pasture. It is owned by Thomas Collins.

The place known as the Wescott farm, afterwards owned by Hiram Martin, is in possession now of James Dalton. When the reservoir was laid out this farm was materially interfered with. The house was torn down and the water flooded the home meadow and garden, the road was rebuilt, and upon the east side of it, farther to the north, James Dalton built his house.

The L. H. Brown place is a beautifully located farm, the land lies on the borders of the village, consists of level river flats, with sloping foothills, and some timber land. It is good grass land, raises grain, and has produced good crops of tobacco and hops. It is still owned by the heirs of L. H. Brown, and is managed by tenants, or rented to different parties.

On the extreme western hill-top, overlooking the village, and clearly visible from it, is the farmhouse of Hezekiah Mason. Standing on the village street as the sun goes down, looking up the mountain road to the very top, the great house rises, the rays of the sun reflected upon its windows flash and sparkle like diamonds. This farm fell in the succession from Hezekiah to Avery Mason and to the children of the latter.

To a descendant of Hezekiah Mason the fickle goddess, Fortune, has been very lavish, and among the petroleum bubbles she has found one that, breaking at her feet, has left, as substantial evidence of Fortune's favor, riches, diamonds, and a superb elegance that contrasts strangely with the mountain farm house. On this farm now lives Larry Curran.

The Allan Fish farm was a noted one in the years gone by. In 1884 it was sold to Mr. Linden, who lives on the Round's place, the house like many another being left unoccupied.

To Mrs. Matthew Dooly belongs the Dickens Wescott farm. To J. St. John the old Vincent home, and to B. Clancey that of C. Cole. These mountain farms are not kept at the point they had attained a quarter of a century ago when money was made in sufficient quantities to do well by large families.



Samuel Baker bought, in the spring of 1884, the Mason Wood place located on the hill beyond the kitchen.

Following down this hill we come next to the farm known as the "Neddy Farm," and owned for years by David Cole and later by his son C. D. Cole.

Just beyond the Baker, and opposite from the Elder Leland place, is the home of Lyman Mason, grandson of Hiezekiah. Here he has lived for many years, and is one of the few descendants of Hiezekiah Mason who are left in this vicinity.

Approaching the Kitchen from the east is the home of Thomas Cropper who has carried on the business of a butcher since 1865, having a shop at Maple Grove. This man followed Farnum & Leach in the trade and is one of the oldest dealers in this line.

The farms owned by Nathan and Daniel Wood on the western hill have always remained in the possession of their descendants. In one, Mrs. Daniel Wood lives in a pretty, modern home. The other is owned by Mrs. Arvin Wood, both ladies being widows of direct descendants of the first owners. The latter place is managed by George Northup. (In 1884.)

That of the father of Stephen Ingalls and to which place the latter was taken when only a boy, is owned and occupied by David Ingalls, youngest son of Stephen.

In this neighborhood called "Thunder," lies the small farm owned by Elder John Leland. The house in which he lived until the death of his wife still stands in good condition, it is owned by Miss Desire Mason and is rented. The farm owned by Stephen Northup who cleared the land, now belongs to Farnum Brothers and is occupied by E. Halpin.

At the top of the hill leading from the Kitchen is the quaint, brown house where Tollman Whitmarsh lived of yore, and where he loved to gather around his forge the prisoners of 1812 and listen to their tales of "Merrie England," and "Life on the Rolls" in America. Calvin Ingalls is its owner and resident now.

Advancing up the now grassy, but once busy, Pork Lane, on the brow of the hill, is standing the house where Jesse Mason lived in Revolutionary days, from which he went forth to join the forces of Stark at Bennington, and where he sheltered the frightened men after the collapse of Shay's rebellion. Both house and land are well kept, the deep well with its iron bound bucket, and mossy sides is seen in the side yard. A great barn with modern arrangements has taken the place of the old barns and milking sheds. The apple trees grow in the stone-walled field, the narrow foot lane leads down to the half-acre lot and the brook beyond. The cows browse in the fields and in the pasture by day and come up to the milking-yard at the setting of the sun. Everything has an air of thrift and prosperity under the supervision of Mr. Leroy Northup.

Next in order is the farm where Simon Wood lived in the long ago. When Pork Lane was a gay thoroughfare this home was among the brightest, made so by a large family of young people who drew the youth of the neighborhood around them and caused the low rooms to resound with mirth and song. Lyman Northup, father of J. G. Northup, town clerk of Cheshire, was the successor of Mr. Woods, and later the farm fell by purchase to Morris Carroll its present proprietor.

On the opposite side of the lane farther to the north is the farm of the Brown's. Richmond Brown being the last one of the name who lived upon it. It was bought by Jerome Sweet, son of Elder Elmathan Sweet, and is now in the hands of Eugene Phillips and his wife Laura Sweet Phillips. This is not a large farm but is in fine preservation, and the house kept in perfect repair is one of the model homes that every one loves to visit. There is no cheese dairy kept upon it, but the finest butter

in the market is made there; the cows are Jerseys, mingled with other breeds, noted for good butter. Fowls are kept with great attention, grass is cut and grain raised.

Following this is the Caleb Brown land where the wolves, skulking down from the near mountain sides, heavily timbered then to the very tops, carried off the calves and lambs if they were not carefully fastened within the fold at the approach of night. Captain C. J. Reynolds owns and lives upon this farm. He is a retired sea captain who has resided here for the last twenty years. His wife is a great-grand-daughter of Valentine Bowen the first tything-man of the settlement. Alonzo Chase occupies the next house beyond; the land is largely mountain and wood lot, and was the Roswell Mason farm.

Next is the farm owned and occupied by George Carpenter, from whose door-stone a magnificent view of mountains and valley delights the eye.

Just at the junction of the old and the new roads, are the Cole farms. Israel Cole, the pioneer, settled first, close by Stephen Northup. He built his log house, cleared a spot of level land and put in his crops. The first growth of corn was unusually fine. He watched it with deepest interest as it tasselled and ripened beneath the September sunshine, for it meant a great deal to the settler to have a fine crop of corn when winter came.

One day he received a call from an acquaintance who had cast his lot on Pork Lane. The man was cross and dissatisfied, expressed himself as vexed for having settled there, and at length confessed that he could not agree with his neighbor next door; said that he annoyed him, trespassed upon and quarrelled with him. At last he declared that the object of his visit was to ask Israel Cole to exchange farms. Mr. Cole hesitated. The land on Pork Lane was quite as good as his own, he thought. The location was superior, he knew, for the lane had turned out a very popular street, the number of acres were the same, there was little choice in the buildings; but there was the noble field of corn that he had watched with such delight—how could he sacrifice that? The two men talked it over, again and again, and finally quite unable to reach an intelligent decision, Mr. Cole sought his wife and asked her opinion. The little woman stopped her work, and listened with attention to the story of the proposed change. She saw at once the advantage it would be to live on a thickly settled road, near to the best families the settlement afforded, and the moment her husband had finished the narration she exclaimed with enthusiasm:

"La, Mr. Cole, don't let one crop of corn stand in the way of such a chance. Settle the question before the foolish man is sick of his bargain."

This ended the matter. The arrangements were made, the families moved, and three days later the proposer of the trade would have thrown in a big bonus could he have had back the Pork Lane property. The place where Israel Cole first moved was in the hollow beyond George Carpenter's present domicile. Afterwards he purchased the farm which was owned by James Cole, his son, at a later date. Upon the death of the latter it fell to Dexter. Part of the farm was sold by him. The house on the original farm is occupied by the widow of Mortimer Cole, son of Dexter. A new house has been erected on the main road and is owned by E. Phelps, son-in-law of Mortimer Cole.

The farm known as the Deacon Carpenter farm where he settled when that section was yet New Providence, is on the road to Adams, a road which was the only way to reach that town for many years. This has always been among the best farms and its successive owners have made themselves comfortable fortunes there. Levi Mason dying in 1841, left some \$30,000, made and laid away while on this farm, and was con-

sidered a very rich man. Alonzo Mason great-grandson of Hezekiah, is its present owner, and has put up, recently, fine buildings.

Cheshire Harbor is a manufacturing hamlet located among the hills and where the valley narrows. A cotton factory owned by Elisha Jenks has long been in successful operation at this point, through the management of Mr Jenks until his death. Since that time under the ownership and oversight of the Adams Brothers, manufacturing men of Maple Grove.

The farm purchased early in the century by Ephraim Farrington, then by Zebedee Dean, and having only these two owners until the death of Mr. Dean, is now owned by Thomas Prest, who came to Cheshire from Tennessee in 1870.

The splendid place of Ira Richardson is owned now by C. K. Lamphear, who bought it of the Richardson family. Jonathan Richardson built the house on the farm owned for many years by Silas Cole, or his heirs. Mr. Albertson Cole resides there now. He pays much attention to vegetable gardening, and carries early plants, small fruits, and vegetables to market.

The Medad King farm and house upon it, which was the early inn, is owned by Mrs. Barbara Martin. The steep roofed house built in 1768, is still in good preservation, but is unoccupied at present. A new, and exceedingly tasty house has been put up by Mrs. Martin, on a grassy knoll across the street near where the few tall elms stand, that are left of the many that threw their shade across the grass plat and ancient stoop, that day when the gun sounded its call for Bennington.

At the extreme eastern portion of the town is the farm of Martin Cole, and northerly on the same road is that of Stewart White, which he inherited from Daniel Reid, his great uncle, to whom reference has frequently been made in the earlier decades. Mr. White is a native of the Hill, and thoroughly posted on its history.

The great house on the glebe land is in charge of its agent, Shubal W. Lincoln, and is rented to E. Wood. On the Dr. Cushing place, George W. Perkins has lived as tenant for twenty-five years.

The old Stafford property on the brow of the hill, extended on both sides of the highway, the dwelling house of Frank Prince is on the western side.

S. W. Lincoln owns two farms in the vicinity; but lives at the one where was formerly the hotel on the old stage route.

Philo Leonard owns the Charles Bliss farm. Just below this place is a sand bed and saw mill, owned by E. F. Adams. Over the field from the site of the old meeting house on the Hill, lives Albert Wells, teacher of the school at Pumpkin Hook, and with him that noted individual, "the oldest inhabitant," Mrs. Field, who counts her ninety-fifth year, with active mind and good memory. The largest part of this life that began in the last century, has been spent upon this spot, and, probably, no person knows more of the past and present of New Providence settlement than does Mrs. Field.

Well on to the northeastern limit of the town is the land cleared by Deacon Jonathan Richardson, when he first came through the woods from Newton. Mr. John Burt owned it for many successive years. It is now owned by H. F. Wood.

Warner Farnum was a substantial farmer on the southern declivity of Stafford's Hill, and to his descendants the land still belongs. Ira Curtis living upon it as a tenant.

Jackson Farnum, son of Warner, owns a farm in the vicinity, upon which James Keily lives, and a part of the old David Bowen farm just beyond, or adjoining the Jacques place. Mr. J. Farnum bought a place on Richmond street in 1873, where he has lived since.

On the farm near the Cheese factory at Pumpkin Hook, is the pleasant home of

Scott Jenks, son of Harvy Jenks. The factory is a large, commodious building, the pink of neatness in every quarter. At a little distance from it, on one side, is the home of S. L. Lincoln, on the other is that of W. F. Card. The latter farm contains 170 acres and is beautifully located.

At the old Sayles homestead, just beyond the school house, lives Mrs. Alanson Wood, and her son John Wood. Mrs. Wood is a direct descendant of the first Sayles that settled at Stafford's Hill, and has spent her life there.

The Edmonds farm, now belonging to David Richmond's heirs, is situated on the slope of the hill toward the south, and was a flourishing farm in the early times. Mr. Edmonds lived there for many years, and reared a large family. The sons were among the substantial men of the town, twenty-five years' ago, but are mostly gone from the old places, but few of the descendants remaining in this neighborhood. Thomas Edmonds formerly owned the farm belonging to the heirs of George Martin and James Shay.

The land of Charles Jenks, is pleasantly located on the main road, and his dwelling house stands in a delightful spot, a crystal brook flows by on one side, crossed by a rustic bridge, and great trees shade it on the other. Charles Jenks, Sr., settled in Adams as early as 1787.

Coming down the road from Stafford's, the farm of Daniel Chapman lies at the right. It has passed from the possession of the family. Thomas Corliss is its owner now. Stephen and Mason Chapman, sons of Daniel Chapman, are among the farmers who have bought residences in the village, and are active citizens.

Along this road the views are beautiful and romantic; at the east and south is a ridge of towering rocks, with scraggy bushes, and gnarled trees growing from the seams and crevices all up and down their surface. These are called Whitford Rocks, a name given, no doubt, from the name of an early settler who owned property there, Peleg Whitford. Tradition tells a tragic tale of his death, by a fall from their steep, rough summit to the crags below. Some believed the fatal leap was taken by himself. Advancing along this high, narrow road that winds along the ridge of land, suddenly is opened to view a plain, as level and smooth as art could make it, not a rock, a stone, or a tree is upon it, the thick grass of many year's growth covers the whole area and presents its enchanting green to the eye. At this point we find the Bennet farm, occupied to-day, by descendants of the first John Bennet, who bought this land of Daniel Brown. The swelling hills, gentle slopes, and rounded views, are just the same as when his eye first rested upon them, and his children show their wisdom in retaining the soil of their ancestors; for it is fertile, under good cultivation, and presents so many prospects upon which the eye loves to linger.

Taking a more northerly road from Stafford's hill; driving past the old church site, the ancient grave-yard with its simple inclosure; by the farms of Martin Jenks, and the one first cleared by John Wells, now owned by Jesse A. Jenks, the valley may be reached at the little hamlet of Maple Grove.

The house is still standing upon the farm of Mr. Jenks, in which Major Low lived, and kept the slaves Tony, Violet, and Mary Diamond. Mr. Jenks is an enterprising man, and has lately put the buildings in good repair; however, there are many landmarks that point to the day and times when Major Low walked the fields, and crossed over to the meeting-house on Sunday mornings, where he was wont to worship with his neighbors. This Mr. Jenks, the present owner, is a prominent townsman, and carried on at one time a cheese factory, which was finally burned down and not rebuilt.

The next oldest farm—or a contemporaneous one—is passed on this road. Joseph Bennet, who was its owner for some years after exchanging with John Wells, left no descendants in town, the farm was disposed of, and for successive years was known as the “Nick Brown place.”

Turning from the high land to descend into the Hoosac Valley, the beautiful farm of Russel Harrington is passed. He sold his home in Adams to the Hoosac Tunnel company in the first days of that mammoth enterprise, and since that time has resided upon this spot, which is a fine dairy farm, pleasantly situated and productive. It is the same that the first John Wells gave to his daughter upon her marriage to Zephaniah Buffington as a bridal present. The pioneer had added gradually to his possessions that he carried from Warwick on horseback, and by the time his sons and daughters were grown he had verified the prediction of Tibbits when he returned to Rhode Island, as noted in our introductory chapter.

This place which was one of the early settled ones is a desirable location to-day, lying in the immediate vicinity of Adams, a busy, thriving village; it is near a good market, and while the land presents to the eye an uneven surface, with swells and rolling hills, it is all under good cultivation. Mr. Harrington has a large family of boys reared as practical farmers. Lying next to this place is that which was settled by the Braytons in early days, partly in Adams, and partly in the, then, New Providence Grant. It has been known for many years as the Spencer Edmonds' farm.

The village of Cheshire has gained incomparably by the additions it has received from time to time of those who have come within its limits to make their permanent homes, but while it has reaped so great a benefit the town has been a loser. Many of the houses along the higher mountain roads are deserted, some have been empty and neglected from year to year until, finally, they have tumbled down, and were it not for the foreign element which has, in a measure, come to the rescue, many more of these wind swept farms would be deserted, and left forlorn and untenanted as when first seen by the pioneers.

Compared with the boundless prairies of the west, they are not the places to live, if one is compelled to wrench his fortune from the rugged fields; but the French and Irish peasantry, who have flocked to Berkshire in far greater numbers than any other nationalities, with their more simple tastes, and fewer wants, are able to secure a sustenance for themselves and theirs.

# NAMES OF PIONEERS

## WHO TOOK UP LAND IN THE NEW SETTLEMENTS.

Nicholas Cooke—Providence, R. I., June 28, 1765, one half of certain land containing in all 1176 acres, lying north and adjoining New Framingham.

Joseph Bennet—Coventry, R. I., June 28, 1765, one half of certain tract containing in all 1176 acres, lying north and adjoining New Framingham.

Nicholas Cooke—Providence, R. I., June 26, 1766; Joseph Bennet—Coventry, R. I., June 26, 1766. To each one of them one half part of 3740 acres and 14 perches laying northerly and adjoining Lanesborough partly and partly on No. 4, excepting land 1176 acres now owned by them.

Joab Stafford—Coventry, R. I., November 5, 1766, 3 several tracts lying between East Hoosuck and Williamsburg. Lot No. 5, 290 acres; lot No. 17, 100 acres; lot No. 22, 96 acres and are parts of a certain tract conveyed to us by Aaron Witherell.

John Bucklin—Coventry, R. I., November 6, 1766, one tract of 200 acres lying between East Hoosuck and Williamsburg, and is lot No. 1.

Nathaniel Jacobs—Providence, R. I., November 6, 1766, 4 several tracts lying between East Hoosuck and Williamsburg. Lot No. 7, 237 acres; lot No. 10, 110 acres; lot No. 11, 66 acres; Lot No. 25, 125 acres.

Samuel Low—Providence, R. I., November 6, 1766, 3 several lots lying between East Hoosuck and Williamsburg, three-quarter parts of lot No. 4, containing in all 200 acres, which is 150 acres, the other one-quarter being set off to be appropriated for a meeting house, also lot 27, 111 acres; lot 28, 108 acres.

Simeon Smith—Providence, R. I., November 6, 1766, two lots lying between East Hoosuck and Williamsburg. Lot No. 17, 100 acres, and is the westernmost half of lot No. 3.

Jabez Pierce—Providence, R. I., November 6, 1766, 3 several lots lying between East Hoosuck and Williamsburg. Lot No. 2, 200 acres; lot No. 12, 102 acres; lot No. 20, 100 acres.

Nicholas Cook—Providence, R. I., November 6, 1766.

Joseph Bennet—Coventry, R. I., division of lands in Massachusetts. Land in No. 4, alias Williamsburg and in lot 121, second division, 100 acres.

John Wells—Cranston, R. I., May 17, 1768. Land in No. 4, alias Williamsburg, lot 116 in second division.

Nicholas Cook—Providence, R. I., June 25, 1768. Land in New Providence and in part of lot No. 6, 100 acres about.

Henry Tibbits—Warwick, R. I., July 15, 1768. Land in No. 4, alias Williamsburg and in lot 120, second division.

Nathan Comstock—Cumberland, R. I., September 20, 1768.

Ichabod Comstock—Cumberland, R. I. Land in East Hoosuck and is lot 5 in proprietor's division.

Elisha Brown—Warwick, R. I., Oct. 6, 1768. Lot No. 46, second division, North Range in Lanesborough.

Stephen Carpenter—Providence, R. I., February 8, 1769. Land in New Providence and contains 115 acres.

Daniel Brown—Warwick, R. I., March 1, 1769. Land in Lanesborough, lot No. 45 supposed to be second division.

Zebadiah Shepardson—Providence, R. I., April 11, 1769. Land lying between East Hoosuck and Williamsburg and is lot No. 116, 100 acres.

Daniel Bennett—Scituate, R. I., April 22, 1769. Land in No. 4, alias Williamsburg. Lots in No. 20 and 102 containing 100 acres.

John Tibbits—Warwick, R. I., April 24, 1769. Land in Lanesborough, North lot No. 70, second division, except two pieces containing 24 acres part of North lot also part of East lot in second division containing 20 acres.

Hezekiah Hammond—Scituate, R. I., April 26, 1769. Part or 218 acres.

Nicholas Cooke—Providence, R. I., June 21, 1769.

Joseph Bennett—Discharged. New Providence, County of Berkshire. Land in New Providence.

Edmund Jencks—Smithfield, R. I., July 26, 1769.

Jesse Jenks—Cumberland, R. I. Land in East Hoosuck, No. 2, 3 and 4, in the west range of settling lots.

Nicholas Cooke—Providence R. I., September 16, 1769. Land in New Providence. Lot No. 12, 102 acres. Lot No. 20, 100 acres.

Ichabod Comstock—Smithfield, R. I., October 31, 1769. Land in East Hoosuck and is part of lot No. 4.

Peleg Whitford—West Greenwich, R. I., December 15, 1769. Land in No. 4 alias Williamsburg being lot No. 115 in the second division containing in all 100 acres.

Henry Bowen—Warrowier, R. I., December 27, 1769. Land lying between Westfield and Sheffield. 600 acres by estimation.

Daniel Goshen—West Greenwich, R. I., April 2, 1770. Land in Jerico. Part of lot No. 4.

Samuel Carew—Providence, R. I., May 14, 1770. Land in New Providence. Lot No. 12, 102 acres; No. 13, 103 acres, and No. 4, 105 acres.

Andrew Edmunds—Warwick, R. I., May 14, 1770. Land in No. 4 alias Williamsburg. Lot No. 111 in the second division. 100 acres.

Benjamin Roberts—Warwick, R. I., August 2, 1770. Land in New Providence. Lot No. 18, 100 acres.

Eleazer Brown—Smithfield, R. I., August 16, 1770. Land in East Hoosuck. Part of lot No. 4, containing 105 acres.

Joshua Reed—Scituate, R. I., August 31, 1770. Land lying between East Hoosuck and Williamsburg. Lot No. 10, 110 acres; Lot No. 11, 65 acres.

Timothy Mason—Cumberland, R. I., September 1, 1770. Land in No. 4 alias Williamsburg. Lot No. 120 in second division. 85½ acres.

Robert Car—West Greenwich, R. I., October 29, 1770. Land in Jerico. Part of 14th lot. 100 acres.

Elisha Brown—Warwick, R. I., Nov. 13, 1770. Two tracts lying in Williamsburg. Lot No. 117 in the East division. 100 acres. Also the west end of lot 111, in the second division 30 acres.

Moses Fisk—Scituate, R. I., Nov. 28, 1770. Land on the Mountain Grant. 155 acres.

Job Salisbury—Cranston, R. I., November 28, 1770. Land on the Mountain Grant, Goodrich Grant. 104 acres.

Zephaniah Keech—Glocester, R. I., December 4, 1770. Land in No. 4 alias Williamsburg. Lot No. 31 in second division and contains 100 acres.

Jeremiah Smith the third—Smithfield. March 23d, 1771. Land in East Hoosuck and in lot 11 in the second division.

Nicholas Cooke—Providence, R. I., June 11, 1771. Land in New Providence. Part of lot No. 6. 65 acres.

William Lewis—Richmond, R. I., July 18, 1771. Land lying north and adjoining Lanesborough. Lot, No. 5, and part of lot No. 8, in the division of Col. Dwight's grant.

Abeathar Angel—Scituate, R. I., September 3, 1771. Land in Lanesborough, being a part of the Easternmost lot No. 63 in the second division.

Samuel Hopkins—Newport, R. I., October 28, 1771. Land in Great Barrington being part of lot No. 5, in the west division of lots.

Elias Gilbert—Newport, R. I., Oct. 27, 1771. Land in Great Barrington, and is shown on purchase 50, called 16 acres.

Daniel Coman—North Providence, Co. of Providence, November 28, 1771. Land in Lanesborough, lot No. 18 in first division.

Charles Arnold—Smithfield, R. I., December 18, 1771. Land in East Hoosuck being lot No. 6 in east range, 100 acres.

Elisha Brown—Warwick, R. I., Dec. 10, 1771. Land in Lanesborough. "All my lands that I had or ever had that is all my rights, &c."

Nicholas Cook—Providence, R. I., January 16, 1772. Land in New Providence. Lot No. 16.

David Hopkins—probably of Newport, R. I., March 30, 1772. His father, Samuel Hopkins, being from Newport. Land in Great Barrington, 21 acres.

Samuel Hopkins—Newport, R. I., March 30, 1772. Land in Great Barrington, Discharged.

Thomas Matteson—Warwick, R. I., May 2, 1772. Land in Lanesborough, the west lot, No. 52 in the second division, 100 acres.

John Fisk—Scituate, Co. of R. I., October 13, 1772. Land in East Hoosuck No. 15 in second division, containing 200 acres.

John Phillips—Glocester, R. I., May 4, 1773. Land in Gageborough, 100 acres, and is lot 114.

John Phillips—Glocester, R. I., May 4, 1773. Land in Gageborough, 150 acres, all of lot in first division.

John Phillips—Glocester, R. I., June 1, 1773. Land in Gageborough, lot No. 33 in first division, 150 acres.

Joseph Brown—Cumberland, R. I., June 4, 1773. Land in Gageborough, 77 acres and 54 rods.

James Barker—Middletown, R. I., June 9, 1773. Land in Lanesborough, part of the east lot, No. 66 in the second division. The whole of the lot No. 66 except 25 acres.

James Barker—Middletown, R. I., June 9, 1773. Land in Lanesborough, part of Lots No. 21 and 76 in second division,  $57\frac{1}{2}$  acres.

John Barker—Newport R. I., June 9, 1773. Land in Lanesborough being part of lots No. 21 and 76 in the second division containing 67 acres.

James Barker—Middletown, R. I., September 4, 1773. Land in Lanesborough, 1 acre.

Elisha Brown, Jr.—Warwick R. I., October 2, 1773. Land in Gageborough, homestead containing 144 acres and 128 rods.

Thos. Bussey—Glocester, R. I., October 22, 1773. Land in Gageborough, farm containing 150 acres.

Benjamin Ellis—Warwick, R. I., February 5, 1774. Land in Lanesborough. Lot 41 in second division.



John Brayton—Smithfield, R. I., December 13, 1784. 22½ acres. Possession December 17, 1784.

Nicholas Cooke—Providence, R. I., November 11, 1776.

Joseph Bennett—Coventry, R. I., 2 certain tracts lying between East Hoosuck and Williamsburg. Lot No. 12, 102 acres; lot No. 20, 100 acres.

Joseph Martin—Providence, R. I., November 11, 1776. The easternmost half of a 20 acre lot lying between East Hoosuck and Williamsburg, and is lot No. 2.

William Brown—North Providence, R. I., June 10, 1767. Lot No. 118 in second division in Williamsburg.

Joseph Aldridge—Glocester, R. I., June 26, 1776. Lanesborough, No. 70 in second division.

Shubael Wilmarth—Providence, R. I., October 31, 1767. Land between East Hoosuck and Williamsburg, the westernmost half of lot No. 2.

Elisha Brown—Warwick, R. I., November 9, 1767, Land in Lanesborough, No. 41. second division.

Elisha Brown—Norwich, R. I., November 26, 1767, Land in Lanesborough, No. 45. supposed to be in second division.

John Tibbits—Warwick, R. I., February 4, 1768. Land in No. 4, alias Williamsburg Lots 116 and 119 in second division.

Heury Tibbits—Warwick, R. I., April 26, 1768.

# PETITION

BY THE INHABITANTS OF CHESHIRE REQUESTING THE PUNISHMENT  
OF BRITISH PRISONERS.

CHESHIRE, July 8, 1814.

Sir,—We, the subscribers, inhabitants of the town of Cheshire, supposing that you have the power to control or remove the British prisoners now located in Cheshire, think proper to state that they have conducted themselves in such a manner as to render their longer stay in this place highly improper. To pass over as trivial, numberless instances of disorderly and shameful conduct of which they have been guilty, we want to merely state that they have recently indulged themselves in the amusement of firing, with bullets, lengthwise of the street, at a mark, and a few days since fired two balls through the meeting-house, neither have we any reason to believe it accidental. If there are those in Cheshire to whom money is dearer than reputation, and who are willing for the base desire of gain to submit to every indignity and insult, *especially from British officers*, it is not the case with the subscribers. It was thought best by many when the last outrage was committed on the house of worship to give the perpetrators instant chastisement, but they were restrained by two considerations : first, that although their conduct was insulting in the extreme, and such as we shall not tamely submit to, yet they were prisoners and rested safely on the arm of mercy ; and lastly, that it was proper first to request those whose duty it was to provide a suitable situation for them to remove them from Cheshire. We therefore request that they may be immediately removed from this town, and punished for their shameful and disorderly conduct. In the period of our revolution we were not in the habit of being insulted by our prisoners. When our countrymen, taken by the enemy, were cruelly treated and suffered every indignity which a merciless foe could inflict, a system of retaliation was resorted to, and it proved for them better treatment. Unless the public documents deceive us, our countrymen who are so unfortunate as to be taken by the British, are now in many instances treated with great barbarity, and our returning good for evil does not appear to have any effect toward ameliorating their condition. But this is not the object of this communication. Although the British officers may have fared sumptuously on the fat of the land during their residence here, but when, from their repeated and flagrant violations of law and order, the lives and property of the community are jeopardized, it becomes our duty to state that their society is *insupportable*, and that they cannot remain here. We wish you would inform us of your determination by letter as soon as may be, and we would adjure you that a compliance with our request as soon as may comport with your convenience will much oblige the community at large and your very Humble Servants—

To Thos. Melville, Jr., U. S. Sup. Ins.

This is a true copy as sent to Melville with the following subscribers :

Francis Fisk, Daniel Smith, Eli Green, Selectmen ; Alfred Joice, Jos. Bennet, Joseph Brown, Russel Brown, Ethan A. Rix, David Cole, Simeon Wood, Mason Brown, Daniel Mason, Moses Read, Allen B. Green, James Corydon, William Lane,

Jr., Richmond Brown, Wilmarth Dunote, James Brown, John Russel, Rufus Richardson, Rawsel Mason, Levi Mason, Christopher Freeborn, John Chase, Isaac Mason, Warden Mason, Jesse Mason, William Mason, Reuben Wescott, Allen Brown, Anthony Burton, Timothy Mason, Charles Converse, Jno Remington, Elery Burlingame, James D. Brown, Daniel Smith, Jr., John Brown, Benj. Barney, David Smith, Peter Werden, Ebenezer Dagget, Orren Munroe, Ichabod Loomis, Robert de Meranville, Jesse Jencks, Jr., Manning Brown, Otis Hodge, Jr., Russel B. Wolcott, Ephraim Farrington, Joel Barker, Erastus Buck, Elisha Clap, Zebedee Dean, Darius Carpenter, Dexter Mason, Nathan Wood, Francis Bowen, Samuel Fish, Rufus Mason, Jonathan Fish, Jr., Nathan Wood, Jr., John Erskine, Norman Mason, Winthrop Noble, Richard Coman, Lemuel S. Slocum, Joshua Mason, Avery Mason, Andrew Stone, Jonathan Fish, Lewis McSouth, Lewis McSouth, Jr., Brooks Mason, Silas Pratt, Josiah Willis, Silas Baker, Lawrence Jencks, Jr., Charles Thrasher.

## PAY ROLL

### OF THE SOLDIERS FROM CHESHIRE IN THE REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

Pay roll of Captain Daniel Brown's company who marched on the alarm from Lanesborough to Meloomseryek on August 14, 1777, and continued in said service as respectfully noted in the proper column of days : Daniel Brown, Capt., Medad King, Lieut., Thomas Bowen, Seth Pettibone, Silas Barker, Corp., Moses Hinman, Corp., John Green, fifer, Levi Green, drummer, Nathan Mason, John Collins, Coman Mason, David Mason, Shubal Mason, John Clark, Goodyear Clark, Stephen Clark, Rufus Mason, Nathan Mason, James Mason, Daniel Wood, Collins Pierce, Hezekiah Mason, Ezra Barker, Levi Mason, Jeremiah Brown, Newhall Barker, Aaron Mason, Pardon Mason, Stephen King, Jessie Mason, Peleg Whitford, Samuel Whipple, Daniel Coman. Out six days, 35 miles from home. Sum total due, 22£. 4s. 4d.

A pay roll of an independent company of volunteers composed out of the alarm lists of New Providence, Lanesborough, East Hoosuck and Gageborough, commanded by Colonel Joab Stafford of said New Providence, who marched to and in the battle fought near Bennington on the 16th of August. Marched the 14th of August : Col. Joab Stafford, commander, Deacon Jonathan Richardson, Deacon Stephen Carpenter, Capt. Shubael Wilmarth, Capt. Thomas Nichols, Lieut. Timothy Mason, Mr. Eliakim Richmond, Capt. Abeather Angel, Lieut. John Wilmarth, Lieut. Valentine Bowen, Jeremiah Brown, Lieut. Simeon Smith, Lieut. William Brown, Lieut. Asa Wilmarth, Lieut. Noah Hinman, Lieut. Jeremiah Fisk, Henry Tibbits, Lieut. Thomas Collins, Benjamin Baker, Capt. George Shearman, Joseph Haile, Capt. Barnard Haile, six days in service at 9s. per month, 32 miles from home. Total due, 18£. 10s. 18d. William Merher, New Providence, Thomas Pell or Pitt, Jeremiah Collins, Michael Watkins, Joseph Pell, Sipp Ives, one of Warner's men from New Providence, killed, Simeon Smith, Esequ Brown.

Company of volunteers under command of Colonel Joab Stafford, who marched from New Providence, county of Berkshire, July 16th, 1777, to reinforce Colonel Warner's men at Manchester, by orders of General Schuyler: Col. Joab Stafford, Capt. Shubael Wilmarth, Capt. Abeather Angel, Capt. Thomas Nichols, Lieut. Jeremiah Brown, Lieut. Simeon Smith, Lieut. Lewis Walker, Lieut. William Jenkins, Aaron Case, Reuben Simmonds, Hooker Low, Bevin Collins, John Richardson, Simeon Cole, Rufus Spencer, Lieut. John Wilmarth. Marched July 16; miles, 50; returned home July 30; number of days in service 15; due 18£. 15s.

Pay roll of Captain Samuel Low's company in Colonel Simond's regiment of militia, for the county of Berkshire, state of Massachusetts, for service done at Bennington, from the 14th day of August, 1777, to the 19th of the same: Capt. Samuel Low, Lieut. William Jenkins, Jeremiah Bucklin, William Whitaker, Joseph Bennet, Nathan Bowen, Darins Bucklin, William Low, Ichabod Prosper, Robert Whipple, Ephralin Smith, Eben Richardson, Elijah Bowen, Peter Werden, Aaron Case, Aaron Bowen, Daniel Read, Stephen Remington, Nehemiah Richardson, Samuel Stafford, Reuben Spencer, John Ladd. Number of days in service, 6; sum due, 15£.

Captain Low's company for service done at St. Croix, from the 30th day of June to the 14th day of August, 1777 : Samuel Low, Capt., Joseph Pierce, Lieut., William Whitaker, Jeremiah Barker, Nathan Bowen, John Ladd, Jonathan Richardson, Jeremiah Smith, Nathan Mason, Josiah Simmonds, Stephen Remington, Ely Bowen, Thomas Spencer, John Richardson, George Sayles, Richmond Werden, Phillips Cole, Charles Fueshan, Stephen Carpenter, Billings Randall.

Captain Low's company in Colonel Symond's regiment of militia, for service done the United States, in October, 1780, in the alarm to the northward by order of General Fellows : Capt. Samuel Low, Lieut. William Jenkins, Lieut. Jonathan Richardson, Lieut. Benjamin Collins, Lieut. Nathan Bowen, Corp. Daniel Rude, Corp. John Chace, Valentine Bowen, John Wilmarth, Jr., Jeremiah Brown, Stephen Carpenter, Jeremiah Smith, John Lippit, Amos Smith, Richard Stafford, Darius Bucklin, Aaron Bowen, Jeremiah Collins, Zachariah Whitaker, Charles Spencer, Buster Bennet, Joab Stafford, Shubael Wilmarth, Corp. Peter Werden, Lieut. John Ladd, Abiah Jenkins, Rufus Spencer, Robert Whipple, Elkanah Smith, Hooker Low, Peter Werden, Sen., Colta Wilmarth, John Wilmarth. Served from October 13 to 21 ; 96 miles ; total due, 205£. 15s. 10d.

Captain Low's pay roll for service rendered at Pawlet, from the fifth day of September, 1777, to the fifth day of October, both days included in the additional pay for 2£. 10s. per month : Capt. Samuel Low, Lieut. William Jenkins, Sergt. Jonathan Richardson, Sergt. Bevin Collins, Sergt. John Ladd, Corp. Nathan Bowen, Reuben Simmonds, Darius Bucklin, Nehemiah Richardson, Aaron Bowen, Eben Richardson, Rufus Spencer, Thomas Spencer, Josiah Simmonds, Hooker Low, George Sayles, Judah Werden, Stephen Remington, John Chace. Number of days, 27 ; wages, 2£. 5s ; sum total, 51£. Sworn to by Justice Goodrich.

Captain Samuel Low's company in Colonel B. Symond's regiment, for service done the United States in October, 1780, in the alarm to the Northward by order of General Fellows. Entered service October 27th, left service October 28th, served two days. Wages per month, 12£; amount of wages paid per man, 16s. ; number of miles traveled, 20 ; bill at 2 cents per mile, 3s. 4d. ; sum of wages, 19s. 4d. ; whole roll, 7£. 17s. Sworn before me, Justice James Barker. Names of men due to New Providence and Lanesborough Territory now Cheshire : Capt. Samuel Low, Lieut. John Ladd, Sergt. Benjamin Collins, Corp. Elijah Bowen, Jonathan Richardson, William Whitaker, Jeremiah Green, Robert Whipple, Peleg Bowen, John Richardson, Charles Spencer.

In a regiment of Colonel Asa Barnes detached on an alarm on the 13th day of October and joined General Stark at Saratoga, are the following names from New Providence : Rufus Carpenter, Daniel Biddlecome, Joab Stafford, Jun., Levi Wilmarth, Benjamin Bowen, John Wilmarth, John Richardson, Joseph Spencer, Nathan Baker, Jun., Elkanah Smith. Jonathan Richardson, and Jeremiah Smith detailed to help on with baggage. Paid 12s. a piece per month. October 13 to October 29, 16 days in service, 21 cents per mile, 10 miles traveled. Total amount paid, Lieut., 4£. 15s. 4d. ; Sergt., 1£. 6s. ; Corp., 1£. 14s. ; private, 1£. 5s.

## STONE ARABIA.

Men from Lanesborough now Cheshire : Nehemiah Richardson, Moses Wolcott, Ezra Barker, Amos Pettibone, Calvin Hall, Simeon Smith, Benjamin Carpenter, Philip Baker, Giles Baker, Charles Baker, Roger Pettibone, Charles Thrasher, Charles

Chaffee. Engaged from July 10 to October 22. Traveled 120 miles. Captain paid, 44s 10d., Lieutenant, 35s. 4d., Lieutenant, 35s. 4d., Sergeant, 9s. 1d., 2d Sergeant, 8s. 10d

On September 2d, 1779, Charles Grandison from New Providence, was taken prisoner.

February 14, 1790, Simeon Grandison from New Providence was discharged.

John Whiting of New Providence, was killed at Ticonderoga.

Jonathan Greenman of New Providence, died in the army August 5, 1779.

Andrew Hinman of Lanesborough. lived at what is now Cheshire Corners, was drafted from the regiment and went to Quebec.

Thomas Whitney went to Quebec.

Daniel Reed went to Quebec.

David Dunnels also went to Quebec, Saratoga and Valley Forge.

Pay roll of Captain Daniel Brown's Co. who marched on the alarm from Lanesborough to Pawlet on September 5, 1777, and continued in said service and respectfully noted in the proper column of days : Daniel Brown, Capt., George Shearman, Sergt., Enos Jones, Sergt., Amos King, Corp., John Baker, Hezekiah Mason, Cooman Mason, Ezra Barker, John Collins, Curtis Hinman, Aaron Mason, Nathan Mason, Daniel Wood, Pardon Mason, William Bennet. Served 27 days; miles, 70; paid 11s. 8d. sum total due, 60£. 13s. 4d.

An abstract of the pay due to the company under Captain Daniel Brown, in Colonel Benj. Simond's regiment, on the alarm at Berkshire on the 13th of October 1780, paid agreeable to a resolve passed November 13, 1780 : Daniel Brown, Capt., Medad King, Lient., Amos King, Silas Barker, Corp., John Pierce, Hezekiah Pierce, Levi Green, drummer, Samuel Baker, Stephen King, Noble King, Levi Mason, Daniel Wood, John Baker, Shubal Mason, Barnard Mason, Josiah Simonds, George Shearman, William Brown, Petts Baker, Werden Mason, John Tibbits, Jonathan Remington. Six days in service, wages 8s. 9d., mileage 1 penny per mile, wages due, 18£. 3s. 9d., mileage, 18£., same, 10s. 9d., officers substance, 18s., due, 37£. 12s. 6d.-2.

Records at Boston State House, volume 17, page 173.

Daniel Brown's company summoned to the alarm, October 27, 1780. Names from New Providence and Lanesborough now Cheshire : Daniel Brown, Capt., Amos King, Lient., Eliez Pierce, Corp., Gideon Hinman, Peleg Green, Timothy Mason, Nathan Wood, James Cole, David Mason, Barnard Mason, Samuel Baker. Application made November 13, 1780. Wages per day, 1s. 9d., private 1s. 4. Only served two days. Travel, 8d. per mile ; number of miles 12.

Sworn to before me,

JUSTICE A. WHEELER.

Volume 17, page 192, Boston.

Captain Daniel Brown's company in Colonel Simond's regiment, summoned to the frontier October 20, 1780, agreeable to a resolve of General Court passed November 13, 1780. Names of men from New Providence and Lanesborough now Cheshire : Captain Daniel Brown, Lieutenant Medad King, Sergeant Amos King, Sergeant Perez Dean, Jesse Mason, James Clark, James Cole, David Mason, Daniel Pierce, Norvel Baker, Nathan Wood, Aaron Case, Nathan Mason, Noah Hinman, John Tibbits, Paul Barker, ——— Fish, Gideon<sup>\*</sup> Hinman, James Mason. Twenty-six miles travel, out and home. Time of service three days. Pay for captain, 1£. 12s. 2d.; lieutenant, 1£. 12s. 2d.; private, 6s. 2d.; corporal, 8s. 2d.; Sergeant, 8s.

Sworn to before me,

JUSTICE A. WHEELER.

## SOLDIERS OF THE CIVIL WAR.

49th Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteers, nine months men, going out in August 27, 1862, returning September 1863: Edwin L. Temple, August 27, 1862, Company C, \$100 bounty; John Wells, September 1, 1862, Company C, mustered out of service in September, 1863, \$100 bounty; Edson Downs, August 27, 1862, Company C, mustered from service in 1863, \$100 bounty; Isaac J. Cosset, August 1862, Company E, mustered from service when time expired, \$100 bounty; Michael G. Matteson, August 27, 1862, Company E, mustered out September 1, 1863, \$100 bounty; John N. Knight, Company C, \$100 bounty; Norman N. Cummings, September 1, Company C, mustered from service in September, 1863, \$100 bounty; Samuel W. Tiff, September 5, 1862, Company C, mustered out from service in September 1863, \$100 bounty; Gilbert Bristol, August 27, 1862, Company C, \$100 bounty.

49th Massachusetts Regiment, nine months, 1863: Emery King, August 27, 1862, Company C, wounded by gun shot in leg at Port Hudson, mustered out of service in September, 1863, \$100 bounty; Cyrus R. Tower, August 27, 1862, Company C, mustered out September 1, 1863, \$100 bounty; Norman W. Stetson, August 27, 1862, Company C, mustered out September 1, 1863, \$100 bounty; Thomas J. Scott, Jun., Company C, mustered out September 1, 1863, \$100 bounty; John McDonald, August 1, 1862, Company C, mustered out September 1, 1863, \$100 bounty; Michael Silk, August 27, 1862, Company C, mustered out September 1, 1863, time over, \$100 bounty; William E. Loomis, August 27, 1862, Company C, mustered out September 1, 1863, \$100 bounty; Homer O. Mason, August 27, 1863, Company C, mustered out September 1, 1863, \$100 bounty.

49th Massachusetts Regiment, Company C, nine months men, enlisted August 27, 1862, mustered out September 1, 1863, \$100 bounty. Edward F. Munay; Hezekiah W. Sturtevant; Daniel B. Foster, received 1st Lieutenant's commission September 9, 1862; William S. Jacques; Peter McCann, enlisted August 31, 1862; James Mullaly, discharged December 1863, lost leg; Erastus P. Root; Edwin L. Temple, appointed 1st Sergeant of 49th Regiment, Company C, January 1, 1863, detached as Master Armorer at Baton Rouge by General Auger, May 6, 1863.

49th Massachusetts Regiment, Company C, 1862, \$100 bounty. Albert W. Wells, August 24, 1862, discharged January 8, 1863, disability; Henry H. Northrop, entered army April 21, 1861, for three months at Dubuque, Iowa, in 1st Iowa Regiment Company I, discharged August 27, time of service expired, appointed commissary sergeant of 49th Massachusetts Regiment September 19, 1863, mustered out term of service expired; Lewis W. Goddard, September 19, 1862, mustered out September 19, 1863, time of service expired; Truman G. Phillips, August 30, 1862, mustered out September 19, 1863, term of service over; John L. Brown, August 27, 1862, discharged March 1, 1863, disability; Eugene Carissy, Abel Jones, Thurston Tilton and John H. Olin, August 27, 1862, mustered out September 1, 1863, time expired.

57th Regiment, three years, Augustus Clanquaire, January 1, 1864, to July 4, 1865.

52d Regiment, nine months, Isaac J. Crosset,

6th Battery Light Artillery, Michael Kelly, never joined for service.

Veteran Reserve Corps, John Lowe, December 19, 1864 to November 30, 1865.

3d Regiment Heavy Artillery, three years. Herbert Houle, June 17, 1865, end of service; John Nugent, deserted October 9, 1864; Henry Rivers; John A. Thompson.

1st. United States A. Artillery, 1862, three years: Charles N. Brown, Company E, 1862, served three months at commencement of war, wounded in head at Antietam by shell, lost left leg at Fredericksburg, December 13, 1862, discharged February 27, 1863.

32d Regiment, three years: Seldon McNaughton, Company G, enlisted July 16, 1861, served to June '65, transferred. George McNaughton, Company G, enlisted May 16, 1864, served to June 1865.

1st Regiment of Cavalry, three years: James O'Brien; John Souden; John P. Willsy, transferred April, 1864, to navy; John G. Woodruff, December 26, 1863, taken prisoner at the North Anna; J. G. Woodruff mustered out June 26, 1865, prisoner at Andersonville and Milan seven months; Arthur H. Brown, sergeant; George N. Baxter: William Baxter, died October, 1864; Elwell Andros, shot at North Anna: — Hubbard, Andersonville died, taken prisoner at North Anna; Lewis Davis, Andersonville died, taken prisoner at North Anna.

2d Regiment of Cavalry: William N. Newton; Daniel A. Hill; James Dunn, deserted January 4, 1865.

4th Regiment Cavalry, three years: David W. Dimond; Thomas Perry, deserted July 16, 1864.

10th Regiment, 1861, three years: William H. Cousens, June 13, Company B, discharged at Brandy Station, for re-enlistment, re-enlisted December 20, 1863, during the war in 10th Regiment, Company B; Patrick Calahan, Jr., Company D, November 12, 1862; Wilson W. Rice.

20th Regiment, 1861: David Casy, August 1st, 1861, Company A; William R. Rice; Abraham Brown, August 29, 1861, Company A, taken prisoner at Balls Bluff, October 21st, 1861, released February 19, 1862, wounded in face by a gun shot, at battle of Antietam, September 17, 1862, discharged December 19, 1863, at camp in Virginia, re-enlisted December 19, 1863, in 20th regiment Company A. three years.

21st Regiment, Company H, three years: Phil Denio, single.

37th Regiment, three years: Alonzo H. Harrington, Company E, August 12, 1862, \$100 bounty; Henry R. Temple, Company E, married, deserted, \$100 bounty; John Grace, Company E, single, \$100 bounty; Jay Brown, Company E, single, \$100 bounty; Andrew J. Mason, Company A, August 15, 1862, married, \$100 bounty; Patrick Dalton, Company K, single, \$100 bounty; Michael Coney, Company K, \$100 bounty, died May 5, 1863, from wound received at Fredericksburg, December 13, 1862; Peter Dooley, Company K, received 2d Lieutenant's commission July 30, 1862, August 4th was promoted to Captain, sprained ankle at Soansville, Md., honorably discharged March 14th, 1863.

27th Regiment, 1861: Charles H. Bligh, Company E, September 25, 1861, three years, wounded in the arm March 14, 1862, at Newburn, N. C., discharged December 22, 1863, re-enlisted December 22, 1863, in Company E for three years; John Balfin, Company H, September 17, 1861, discharged December 22, 1863, at Norfolk, re-enlisted November 25, 1863, at Newport News, Va., 27th Regiment Company H, three years, and killed at Cold Harbor, June, 1864; Martin Horton, October 17, 1861, three years, Company K, discharged; Stetman Jackson, David Rice, Company H; Henry E. de Maranville, Company H; Samuel Whipple, Company I; Banet Macatine, Company E, September 1, 1861, discharged from disability at Newbern, N. C., January 27, 1863; Charles W. Leonard, Company E, September 9, 1861; John W. Allen, October 1, 1861; bounty \$404.65; Alvin Rider, Company H, October 1, 1861, mustered out September 27th, 1864.



31st Regiment, 1861, for three years, received \$135 bounty. James Dalton, Jun., Company I, deserted : George Rice, Company E : Harvey Mason, Daniel L. Marks, Company A, October 25, 1861 ; William Clothier, Company A, October 1st, 1861, died June 5, 1863, at Brashaar City, La., chronic diarrhoea 1st, yellow jaundice 2d : Homer Carr, October 31, 1861, William Couch, November 6, 1861 : James Bryant, November 6, 1861, discharged February 22, 1864, \$421.33 bounty : Zelotes Rice, December 6, 1861, Company A, re-enlisted February, 14, 1864, mustered in February 24, 1864, promoted to Corporal in March, 1864, discharged September 9, 1865, term expired, received slight wounds at Pleasant Hill, La. : Andrew Katchler, October 8, 1861, Company A, discharged October 15, 1862, on account of varicose veins which appeared May 15, 1862 : John W. Miller, November 20, 1861, deserted 1862.

11th U. S. Infantry, Company A : Ira C. Mattocks, wounded in leg at Ganes Hill, Va., June 27, 1862, discharge April 14, 1863, disability, cause gun shot wound : Henry Reed, Company A. *Olvin Bryant, Comp. A. (Oct 1861) discharge*

34th Regiment, three years, 1861 : Charles Horton, Company E, on July 6 or 7 died at or near Gettysburg, from wounds received at that battle, on the 4th of July, he was a private in the 11th U. S. Infantry at the time of death : Asael R. Cook, Company E, three years ; Erastus M. Hubbard, August 21, 1861, Company B, \$100 bounty ; George Barr, October 21, 1863, \$225 bounty, dismissed for disability.

8th Regiment Infantry, three months : Samuel P. Whipple, wounded in hip and crippled for life : John Arnold : Henry Hines ; John Ober ; Mason Mansfield.

37th Regiment, 1862, three years : Charles Conn, Company K, three years, \$100 bounty ; David White, Company E, corporal, \$100 bounty : William R. Hatheway, Company E, discharged from disability April 15, 1863, died June 20, 1863, \$100 bounty ; Scott Brown, Company K, August 25, 1862, died from chronic diarrhoea on March 23, 1863, in hospital at Falmouth, Va. : Joseph Bellevine, Company E, never left state : Theodore Davis, August 15, 1862, \$100 bounty ; Towner B. Jenks, August 14, 1862, Company A, wounded at Gettysburg July 3, 1863, by shell striking right foot, amputated, discharged January 20, 1864, in cause of this wound, \$100 bounty ; Willet Couch, August 11, 1862, Company E, \$100 bounty ; Benjamin F. Eddy, August 15 1862, Company E, \$100 bounty ; Frederick W. Crossett, Company E ; Samuel Beers, Company B ; Wilbur F. Dwight, Company K, deserted October 9, 1863 ; William J. Simmons, September 4, 1861, Company E, \$100 bounty ; James H. Perkins, Company E, killed by shell at Gettysburg, July 3, 1863, \$100 bounty ; Patrick Clancy, Company E, deserted August 26, 1863.

*11th U.S. Infantry Charles Horton private in Co. E. 34th Regt.*

## TOWN OFFICERS.

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### DECADE FROM 1793—1797.

*Representatives*—Daniel Brown, Jonathan Remington, Jonathan Richardson.

*Town Clerks*—James Barker, Esq., Ezra Barker.

*Treasurer*—Elisha Brown.

*Selectmen*—Jonathan Richardson, Daniel Brown, Timothy Mason, Hezekiah Mason.

### DECADE FROM 1797—1807.

*Representatives*—Daniel Brown, Jonathan Richardson.

*Town Clerks*—Jonathan Richardson, Darius Brown, Joel Richardson, Russel Brown.

*Treasurers*—Elisha Brown, Barnabus Bidwell, Jonathan Knapp.

*Selectmen*—Daniel Brown, Jonathan Richardson, Timothy Mason, Stephen Brayton, Peter Werden, Hezekiah Mason, Elisha Wells, Levi Mason, Daniel Coman, Peter Werden, Jun., John Bennett, Jonathan Knapp, Ephraim Farrington, Daniel Smith, Jessie Jenks, Jun., Stephen Wescott, Darius Brown.

In 1804 Barnabus Bidwell was candidate for the Congress of the United States, received 183 votes from Cheshire, and in 1805 he run for County Treasurer, receiving 185 votes from his townsmen. Whether defeated or elected there is no record.

### DECADE FROM 1807—1817.

*Representatives*—Captain Daniel Brown, Jonathan Richardson, Joseph Bucklin, John Wells, Jun., Rev. John Leland, John Leland, Jun., Allen Brown, Captain Dexter Mason.

*Town Clerks*—Russel Brown, Ethan A. Rix.

*Treasurers*—Jonathan Knapp, Ethan A. Rix, Rufus Richardson, Eli Green.

*Selectmen*—Jonathan Fish, John Wells, Jun., Richard Coman, Daniel Coman, Nathan Wood, Allen Brown, Dexter Mason, John Leland, Jun., Eli Green, Francis Fiske, Daniel Smith, Jessie Jenks, Jun., Nathan Sayles, James Brown.

In 1808 a committee consisting of Captain Joseph Bucklin, Captain Daniel Brown, John Hart, Calvin Hall and Hezekiah Mason, were sent to the Coffee House at Lenox, to meet the republicans of the county and draw up resolutions concerning the embargo. A letter was addressed to the President asking him to suspend the embargo.

### DECADE FROM 1817—1827.

*Representatives*—Ethan A. Rix, Colonel Francis Fiske, Russel Brown, Joshua Mason.

*Town Clerk*—Ethan Rix.

*Treasurers*—Joshua Mason, David Cole, Noble K. Wolcott.

*Selectmen*—Francis Fiske, Moses Wolcott, Levi Mason, Nathan Sayles, Zebedee Dean, James Cole, Daniel Brown, Aaron Hammond, Alden Werden, John M. Bliss, Lyman Northup, Warner Farnum.

1820 Samuel Blaso elected delegate to convention for revising Constitution.

## DECADE FROM 1827—1837.

*Representatives*—James Brown, Nathaniel Bliss, Russel Brown, Sen., Noah T. Bushnell, Lyman Northup, Nathan Sayles.

*Town Clerks*—Ethan A. Rix, Dr. Mason Brown, E. W. Carny, Russel Brown.

*Treasurers*—Noble K. Wolcott, Lyman Northup, Joshua Mason.

*Selectmen*—Warner Farnum, Ira Richardson, James Brown, Nathaniel Bliss, Stephen Northup, Nathan Sayles, Esq., Leland Worden, Benjamin Whipple, Charles Bliss, Joshua Mason, Elisha Jenks, Lyman Northup, Andrew Bennett.

*First School Committee*—Russel Brown, Noah T. Bushnell, Noble K. Wolcott, Elnathan Sweet, Lansing J. Cole.

James Brown gave ten dollars for use of poor instead of for liquor on his election. Road to Adams by way of harbor laid out in 1830. In 1832 the Jackson ticket had 200 votes, Clay ticket, 5 votes. Voted in 1837 to approbate no person to sell spirituous liquors except tavern keepers, and tavern keepers to sell only to travelers, not to the inhabitants of the town of Cheshire. They must give bonds to this effect before getting their license.

## DECADE FROM 1837—1847.

*Representatives*—Stephen Northup, Noah T. Bushnell, Russel Brown.

*Town Clerks*—Russel Brown, Dallas J. Dean, R. C. Brown, J. B. Dean, Francis Jones, Henry Brown.

*Treasurers*—Joshua Mason, Andrew J. Mason.

*Selectmen*—John Burt, Samuel Bliss, Joshua Mason, Andrew Bennett, Ira Sayles, Warner Farnum, Sherburne Mason, Isaac Northup.

*School Committee*—Elnathan Sweet, Noah T. Bushnell, 3d, Warner Farnum, Alanson Jones, Henry Bliss, Lansing J. Cole, 1st, Russel Brown, 2d, W. G. Waterman, Alanson Wood.

In 1840 John Leland of Cheshire was elector for president in District No. 7. In 1845 the town was arranged in different form, eight districts were made. As there was some dissatisfaction L. J. Cole, Joshua Mason, Richmond Brown were chosen district committee. Their report was accepted and sustained by the town.

## DECADE FROM 1847—1857.

After this date the town does not have a representative each year, they are sent by districts.

*Town Clerks*—Henry J. Brown, Jerome B. Sweet, G. B. Wells.

*Treasurers*—J. B. Dean, Joseph Northup, Chauncey D. Cole.

*Selectmen*—R. C. Brown, Pardon Lincoln, Alanson P. Dean, Erastus Pierce, C. Baldwin, H. J. Ingalls, R. M. Cole, John Burt, Jessie Jenks, Warner Farnum, Silas Cole, Mason Chapman, J. N. Richmond, Lawreston Potter.

*School Committee*—Dr. L. J. Cole, W. G. Waterman, Alanson Wood, John C. Wolcott, Esq., Simeon M. Dean, Joshua P. Mason, Horace Colman, Francis Smith, Calvin Ingalls.

*Register of Deeds*—William Fuller.

*Justice of Peace*—J. C. Wolcott.

## DECADE FROM 1857—1867.

*Town Clerks*—H. J. Brown, C. D. Cole, E. F. Nickerson.

*Treasurers*—H. P. Brown, Andrew Bennett, R. M. Cole.

*Selectmen*—Truman Coman, Lansing J. Cole, M. D., Warner Farnum, Shubal W. Lincoln, Luther H. Brown, John Burt, George W. Fisher 5 times, Luther B. Loomis, Orin Martin 5 times, C. D. Cole.

*School Committee*—Albert Wells, H. W. Richardson, E. R. Brown, A. M. Bowker, Jackson Farnum, Lansing J. Cole, E. F. Nickerson, Peter Dooley, Elisha Prince, J. N. Richmond, Ansel Prince, O. C. Kirkham.

## DECADE FROM 1867—1884.

*Town Clerks*—E. F. Nickerson, H. J. Brown, J. G. Northup.

*Treasurers*—R. M. Cole, Thomas B. Brown, Mason Chapman, J. R. Cole, D. F. Bucklin, H. F. Wood, William T. Card.

*Selectmen*—L. J. Cole, C. D. Cole, S. W. Lincoln, George W. Fisher, 12 times, J. D. Northup, Alanson Wood, C. J. Reynolds, H. J. Ingalls, M. W. Ingalls, George Martin, 7 times, J. B. Farnum, M. V. B. Jenks, 7 times, Maurice Carroll, George Z. Dean, F. Reynolds, H. F. Wood.

*School Committee*—Elisha Prince, J. N. Richmond, David O. Ingalls, E. F. Nickerson, L. J. Cole, N. N. Mason, H. C. Bowen, C. D. Cole, J. B. Farnum, Nelson Brown, J. G. Northrop, J. R. Cole, George Z. Dean, Daniel F. Bucklin, R. A. Burget.

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